

HALESOWEN CHRONICLE



Thursday, April 4, 2013

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Costume king

Mike makes sure actors are dressed to impress

Page 4



Competition

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Kicking kids

Kickboxers come back with a haul of trophies

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£150,000 given for museum schemes

OFFICIALS at the Black Country Living Museum in Dudley will take charge of more than £150,000 in arts funding to head up a new programme aimed at boosting Midlands museums.

Twelve museums will benefit from the Arts Council cash through support to develop new projects and improve leadership of the attractions.

It comes as the museum, in Tipton Road, Dudley, is forced to find savings of £250,000 a year as part of cost-cutting plans.

Black Country Living Museum boss Andrew Lovett said museums are living through "turbulent times" and need to pull together.

Investment plans will be drawn up with the Association of Independent Museums body to find ways of becoming more self-sufficient. The £157,000 grant has come from the Arts Council England's Renaissance strategic support fund.

Mr Lovett said: "We are delighted to be stepping up to the challenge to lead this programme in support of large and small museums from across the West Midlands. Personally, I am particularly excited about supporting and energising the next generation of museum leaders."

Crunch talks for Heathens

OFFICIALS and fans from Dudley Heathens Speedway Club will hold crunch talks with council bosses in a bid to find a new home in the town.

A meeting will be held with Dudley Council's leader David Sparks to discuss the possibility of the team returning to the borough. But the councillor has warned them that finding a suitable venue could be difficult. It comes as one champion rider Daniel Greenwood says the club is desperate to race again in Dudley.

TRUST WANTS TO SAFEGUARD SITES

by Andrew Turton

CALLS to protect historic landmarks around Halesowen, including a 13th century abbey site, have been made by campaigners who want to draw up a fundraising action plan.

They want to set up a fundraising committee as part of the Halesowen Abbey Trust and are keen to bring residents and businesses on board.

Landmarks like the former Halesowen Council buildings in the town centre, Lutley Mill and the home of Somers Sports and Social Club based at The Grange should be safeguarded, according to trust members. It comes after the future of the Halesowen Abbey ruins, in the grounds of Manor Abbey Farm, appeared settled as a deal to sell the site was expected to be completed next month.

Halesowen Abbey Trust had harboured ambitions to buy the site itself and was drawing up a £575,000 Heritage Lottery Fund application to create a visitors centre.

But instead private buyers have come forward to buy part the farmhouse and barns surrounding the ruins to create an events and weddings venue.

Campaigners hope to work with those buying Manor Abbey Farm, which is built into the ruins of Halesowen Abbey dating back to 1215, to strike a deal to allow them to hold visitor days.

Positive

However, trust spokesman Mick Freer said "positive" talks had been held with the new owners.

"The members are looking forward to getting to know the new owners. We are confident that we will still be able to host public open days," Mr Freer said.

He added the trust wanted to cast its net wider to ensure that other long-standing buildings in the town were protected for future generations.

"We want to be a doing group rather than just being seen to object. We want to be able to starting raising our own money so that if buildings are in danger in the future then they are protected and we can look to buy them to safeguard their future."

"It will take time but we have got a good group and will be looking to form a committee. We want to try and get businesses involved too."

He says the group wants to help print its second publication this time detailing images by photographer Phil Waldron of Halesowen around the 1950s and later pictures of the abbey in the 1980s.

Email hales.abbey@btinternet.com for further details.

TV's Mike opens reptile house



Peter Suddock and Mike Dilger from BBC1's The One Show opens the reptile house

DUDLEY Zoo's new revamped reptile house has been unveiled following a £15,000 improvement project.

Around 150 visitors turned out to see ecologist and TV presenter Mike Dilger cut the ribbon on the revamped attraction in a ceremony at the weekend.

Mr Dilger, originally from Stafford, said it was an honour to follow in the footsteps of Sir Peter Scott, who first opened the reptile house in 1956.

As part of the scheme, a new glazed entrance has been created with timber flooring and cladding added to walls around the public-viewing corridors.

Individual enclosures have also been remodelled. Mr Dilger gave a speech before officially opening the new-look enclosure

and the ceremony was followed by a tour of the facility.

Mr Dilger, who presents pieces for The One Show, said: "Being from the region I have very clear memories of visiting Dudley Zoo as a child."

"I think the zoo and its staff have done a wonderful job with the improvements to the reptile house and I think everyone at the opening was very impressed by what they saw. I am delighted to have been asked to perform the opening by the zoo. It is always great to be back in the West Midlands."

The reptile house includes an African spurred tortoise, bearded dragon, boa constrictor and Burmese python. Zoo chief executive Peter Suddock said the collection of reptiles was very popular.

Pledge to minimise upset for traders

A LEADING councillor has said disruption to Dudley's historic market would be kept to a minimum during a multi-million transformation scheme.

Proposals for a £6 million overhaul for the market, which has been based in the town since the 12th Century, are in the pipeline alongside a stall rent freeze for 12 months in a bid to boost traders and bring more customers to the high street.

Dudley Council's deputy leader Councillor Shaikat Ali said traders would need to compromise and occasionally work from other stalls for the duration. Details on the plans including the start date for the revamp have yet to be confirmed.

Council bosses have come in for criticism from market traders who claim there has been a lack of consultation over the plans to redevelop the market in the heart of Dudley's High Street shopping area.

But Councillor Ali, said he wanted traders to work "positively" with the authority.

"We are also developing proposals for the multi-million pound investment plans for the market so we hope the market traders will work positively with us to secure the long-term future of our historic market," he said.

● Talks - page 14

Trader faces more surgery

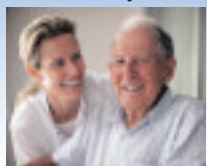
A 48-YEAR-OLD Dudley fruit merchant badly hurt after being dragged along while trying to stop his car being stolen faces further surgery.

Stuart Timmins temporarily left hospital but is due back for more surgery.

He is trying to keep his Lower Gornal-based firm running as he recovers. He was in the warehouse at William Timmins' and Sons yard, Bird Street, last Monday as the car was stolen.

● Ordeal - Page 5

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Russells Hall plans to build a gym

DUDLEY'S Russells Hall Hospital is planning to build a gym for patients and staff.

Thousands will be spent on installing equipment on the site off Pensnett Road.

Patients recovering from illnesses or operations will be able to use the gym as part of their rehabilitation.

Staff will be able to demonstrate suitable exercises for them to do which will benefit their conditions.

Hospital workers will also be able to use the equipment during their breaks. Plans for the gym have been submitted to Dudley Council and will be considered in the coming months.

It would be built on land to the left of the accident and emergency department and education centre.

Once permission has been granted, hospital bosses will secure funding for the development.

It is not yet known exactly how much it will cost but the gym is expected to include equipment such as a cross-trainer, ski machine, leg press and hand bike.

Paula Clark, chief executive of Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, which runs the site, said: "The Dudley Group is committed to providing excellent occupational health initiatives for staff and encourages them to take exercise in

the workplace. The Trust has applied for planning permission from Dudley Council to build an outdoor gym at Russells Hall Hospital for use by hospital staff and patients.

"It would be accessible at all times and allow staff to exercise before and after work as well as during their lunch time. The gym would also provide a 'step down' rehabilitation facility for patients."

Project aims to breathe new life into the town

ARTISTS' impressions have been unveiled showing how a multi-million pound regeneration project would breathe new life into the heart of Dudley town centre.

The Porters Field development earmarked for the site of an old office block includes a supermarket, restaurants, cafes and a gym. It would bring 500 jobs to the town.

The 10 acre area is bordered by the Dudley Southern Bypass and Birmingham Street and includes the 'L' shaped Cavendish House and several other lower level buildings in Hall Street and Trindle Road.

Under the plan by developer Avenbury, the units in Hall Street would be converted into shops, offices, restaurants and food takeaways.

A two-level car park would be built as well as a petrol station.

Ed Grieve, a spokesman for Avenbury, said the scheme would boost the town centre economy, bringing shoppers back and providing competition with centres such as Merry Hill.

Opportunity

He said: "Porters Field represents an opportunity to kick start Dudley's economy and reverse its current decline."

He added: "Porters Field offers long-term benefit, whereas other plans only offer short term gain."

"The application would bring a wider range of shopping and leisure facilities, rather than just a food store, to the heart of Dudley."

The firm's outline planning application for the scheme was due to be approved by Dudley councillors on Tuesday following written recommendations from officers.

The Porters Field scheme is one of two that have been proposed for the Cavendish House site.

Cavendish Quarter Properties Ltd has already won approval to demolish the boarded-up office block to make way for a new supermarket, creating 300 new jobs and 200 during construction work.

It also aims to create an attractive route for people walking to the High Street.

A total of 402 parking spaces would be created partly underneath the store and on two decked levels. The two separate developers each own pieces of land within the site, as do several other landowners including Dudley Council.

Avenbury held a consultation event, which attracted more than 700 people, on its plans in 2011. The developer claims 96 per cent of respondents were in support of its plan. Cavendish House has stood empty since a security firm moved out in 2008.



A view of the Porters Field development from Dudley bus station. The project would include a supermarket, restaurants, cafe and gym

Supermarket plan for centre

THESE are the first impressions of the supermarket proposed for Dudley town centre which hopes to create up to 500 jobs.

They offer a glimpse of the huge glass atrium entrance to the two-storey store.

If permission is granted the 27,000 sq ft supermarket will be built in the New Mill Gate area between Flood Street and King Street and the Fal-

con House office block will be knocked down.

The planned supermarket complex would include a cafe and petrol station.

A car park below the complex will have 278 spaces. The scheme could create up to 500 jobs and bring much-needed redevelopment to King Street.

Developer Commercial Estate Group submitted its final details for the £20million scheme to Dudley Council for approval last month. It includes some design amendments following a public consultation on the idea last year.

Richard Burke, project manager at Commercial Estates Group, said: "We have had very positive discussions with the council and the amendments to the plans make for a scheme which will bring great benefits to the wider community through landscaping, improvements to pedestrian access and a major investment in the heart of the town."

"We look forward to bringing the plans forward in the near future."

Falcon House in The Minories, which dates back to the 1960s, will be demolished as part of the project. The building is in a part of the town which the council is keen to see redeveloped.



The giant glass atrium entrance planned for the 27,000 sq ft store

Brothel is closed down by the police

POLICE have shut down a brothel in a quiet Coseley residential street after neighbours regularly spotted scantily-clad men and women inside a house.

Officers raided the end-of-terrace property in Flavell Street and handed a notice to a 20-year-old woman, ordering the occupants to stop using the house as a sex business.

Neighbours spoke of their relief at the police action and said they hoped it would bring an end to the nuisance behaviour which has plagued the street for two months.

Linda and Bernard Thomas live opposite the address and said they saw men regularly pull up outside the house before being invited in by a woman.

As well as seeing semi-naked people inside the home, they also faced noise disturbances throughout the night and problems of cars pulling up and blocking the road.

Police handed the notice, issued under the Sexual Offences Act, on March 26 at 6.30am.

Sgt Jim Jones said: "We received calls from the local residents who had concerns about the address."

Snowballs stop buses

SNOWBALLS fights have been escalating out of control in some parts of the region, with car windscreens damaged, buses being taken off their runs and police investigations launched.

Two buses have been put out of service recently because youngsters threw snowballs at windscreens.

Former Gornal councillor David Stanley said: "It's intimidating and terrifying for the drivers."

National Express West Midlands spokesman Jack Kelly said: "During bad weather conditions and school closures, we do experience problems with objects being thrown at our vehicles."

Taxi firm is best

A TAXI firm in Dudley has been voted the borough's best. Castle Cars, Wolverhampton Street, has won the taxi base of the year award for 2013 from the council. It amassed 66 nominations out of 317 votes cast during January and February.

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270 sign takeaway petition

MORE than 270 people have signed two petitions against plans to open a pizza shop in Halesowen.

Proposals for the business have been submitted for an empty shop in the Hurst Green Shopping Centre.

But the application lodged with Dudley Council has divided the community with many people voicing their support for the takeaway.

Those who have commented on the scheme include local ward councillors, adjoining businesses and nearby residents.

The council's planning officers have since recommended councillors give approval to the applicant after concluding the takeaway was an acceptable use of the shop and it would not cause disturbance.

The shop is one of six stores along the 1950s parade and has been empty since closing as a farm shop a year ago.

The proposal states the takeaway would be open daily from 9pm to 10pm.

Two petitions containing 275 signatures objected to the proposal, raising concerns over potential disturbance and existing number of food outlets in the area.

A decision was due on Tuesday.

SVR will get new depot

THE building of a £300,000 diesel depot for the Severn Valley Railway is set to begin later this year.

Wyre Forest District Council have cleared the way for the start of work on the depot which will enable maintenance work to be carried out undercover.

Foundations for the building are expected to be put in in the autumn and the facility will be completed in two phases at the railway's yard in Kidderminster.

Since the late 1970s the railway's diesel-owning groups have been forced to carry out maintenance of locomotives in the open.

The railway's fleet of privately-owned diesels has expanded over the years.

4G for borough

MOBILE phone firm EE has launched superfast 4G coverage in Dudley and West Bromwich. EE is the new 4G brand, and it also runs the Orange and T-Mobile brands in the UK. It is the only provider in the UK to offer the service.

Man let his shed be used to make fake discs

A DUDLEY man allowed a counterfeit DVD and CD operation to be run from his garden shed, a court heard.

The highly organised racket had been based in Ace Disks in the town centre but it was closed down after a raid by police and Trading Standards officers.

Stephen Miles, aged 48, had been seen in the High Street premises, and it was discovered that the disc copying operation had been moved to the outbuilding in his garden, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

Behind a false wall in the shed, investigators found a bank of machines burning

off 36 pirated copies at a time, and piles of counterfeit discs had been stored, together with covers for the DVDs and CDs.

Judge Michael Dudley told Miles it was "extremely serious commercial counterfeiting" and normally prison sentences were imposed because of the huge losses suffered by the copyright owners. He said the public also suffered because of the quality of the copies, while artists on the CDs were also not getting any royalties.

A large number of jobbing actors, said the judge, suffered because they had to find other work when money that could

have been used to fund future productions was not available. He said Miles had got involved when the counterfeiting operation in the shop was closed down, adding: "I do not accept that you did not make very much money from what you did."

But it is the loss to others that makes this grave offending.

Miles, of Rosewood Road, Dudley, admitted two charges of aiding and abetting others involved in the operation, and he was given an eight-month jail term suspended for two years.

Mr Christopher O'Gorman, defending, said Miles, who was further put on super-

vision for two years, had given his permission for the copying to take place in his shed for only a few weeks.

There is no evidence of any financial gain, he added, although Miles - said to have medical problems - accepted that his involvement ended with the intervention of the investigating agencies.

Sameer Hussein, of Woodland Street, Smethwick, who ran Ace Disks, was jailed at an earlier hearing for three years after a court was told he had pirated more than 40,000 DVDs and CDs from the "sophisticated" scam he ran in the shop.

£240,000 fuel duty fraud man to pay back £42,000

A DUDLEY businessman who dodged up to £242,000 in fuel duty by illegally selling kerosene as road fuel has been ordered to repay £42,000.

Gavyn Roger Jewkes, aged 34, had admitted making 20p a litre selling the kerosene to cash-strapped Dudley motorists between May 2008 and July 2011. About 400,000 litres of the heating oil kerosene was sold.

Last week at Wolverhampton Crown Court, Mr Recorder Richard Bond found Jewkes had remaining assets of £42,000 that were found to be the benefit from his crime.

He ordered this amount be repaid by September 26 or Jewkes will have to serve 15 months' in jail instead.

Jewkes was sentenced earlier this year at Shrewsbury Crown Court, where it was heard the fuel racket had been started by Jewkes's late father but queues had formed outside the "unofficial fuel depot" at Dudley's Central Trading Estate in Shaw Road as word spread.

The business had never had a licence to sell kerosene which, unlike diesel, does not have duty on it and can damage vehicle engines.

Jewkes was selling the fuel at around £1 a litre while real diesel was being sold at up to £1.37.

Police had caught up with

by Sharon Marris

Jewkes after vehicles coming from the estate were stopped and found to have fuel in their tanks for which duty had not been paid, prosecutors said.

Jewkes, of Claydon Road, Dudley, had accepted responsibility for some of the evasion, arguing he only took charge of the firm after his father died in 2010.

He admitted being involved in fraudulently evading duty and was sentenced to 12 months in prison, which was suspended for two years as well as 240 hours unpaid work.

At the time, Judge Robin Onions told him: "The business was in part illegal. You knew what was going on and you played your part with your father."

The judge had directed a not guilty verdict on Jewkes's partner Emma Jones, 33, also from Claydon Road, who had denied the charge.



Front, parks activity activator Tom Weaver, with middle left to right, group member Lyn Turberville, from Wordsley, and Dudley Stroke Association Development Officer Roger Edwards preparing for the 5k challenge at The Dell Stadium

Running up funds to boost charity

FUNDRAISERS are under starter's orders ready for a fun 5k challenge to raise cash for those recovering from strokes.

People who attend Dudley Stroke Association's weekly fitness classes at the Dell Stadium, Pensnett, Brierley Hill, have helped organise the challenge.

Money raised from the free event on April 10 will go to charity.

The event will be started by the Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Melvyn Mottram.

The mayor has nominated Dudley Stroke Association as one of his charitable causes during his time in office. Anyone can take part and complete any distance they feel able to do during the day, which starts from 10am.

Charity trustee Anne Adams said it was the first time the association had organised such an event and paid tribute to fitness class members who came up with the idea.

She added: "People can do as much or as little of the walk as they like. The message is life goes on after a stroke and its something we believe in." For entry details, call 01384 271982 or visit www.dudleystrokeassociation.org.uk

Watch scheme for pupils

PRIMARY school children across Dudley are taking part in a new junior neighbourhood watch scheme to help them stay safe. The scheme will help educate youngsters to keep themselves and people around them safe.

They will be quizzed by Pcsos about safety issues and encourage their involvement in their own communities.

Dudley Council's community safety chief, Councillor Judy Foster, said: "Junior neighbourhood watch is a fantastic initiative."

NEWS in brief

Volunteers call to help festival

DEDICATED volunteers responsible for organising one of the region's biggest arts festivals is looking for more people to help out behind the scenes.

Bewdley Festival has been running for nearly 26 years and was originally launched with the objective of showcasing everything the town had to offer and bringing in big names.

Spokesman David Collins said: "We are always searching for new people." To get involved call 01299 404808 or email admin@bewdleyfestival.org.uk

Profits are hit at B&Q parent firm

B&Q owner Kingfisher saw record wet weather punch a £25 million hole in its profits for 2012, with sales continuing to slide.

The weak pound also cost the group £39m as it lost money converting from euros and zlotys from overseas stores.

As a result, pre-tax profits were down 11.4 per cent to £715m as sales, not including stores open less than a year, fell 2.4 per cent to £10.6 billion.

The B&Q chain saw sales in the UK and Ireland fall two per cent.

Former students wanted for film

FORMER students at City of Wolverhampton College's Paget Road campus are wanted to share their memories in a documentary celebrating the 50th birthday of the site.

The college wants anyone who has studied at the campus since 1962 particularly former students who went on to work in their studied subject. To take part in the film call 01902 317646 or email media-cove@wolvcoll.ac.uk

Talks on saving modern buildings

TALKS will be held in Dudley on preserving 20th century architecture in the West Midlands.

They will be held at Dudley Zoo on April 18.

The event runs from 9.30am to 3.45pm, and places cost £25 each and include refreshments, lunch and entry to Dudley Zoo. Call 07771 458119.

Music and poetry

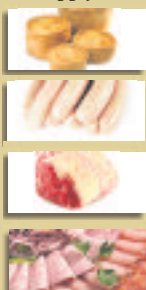
AN evening of music and poetry will be held at a Kidderminster pub on April 9. The Mouth and Music event will see poet Ddotti Bluebell perform at the Boar's Head, Worcester Street from 8pm.

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NEWS

THE BEST
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RHODES

DAVID Miliband is quitting British politics to become president and chief executive of the International Rescue Committee which is apparently in New York. Own up. How many of us thought it was based on Tracy Island?

□□□□□□□□

ED MILIBAND says the political scene will be "a poorer place" without his brother David. This is the same Ed Miliband who stabbed David in the back to get the Labour leadership. "Breathtaking gall" doesn't even begin to describe it.

□□□□□□□□

TALKING of warring families with a tendency to impale each other on sharp objects, I was at Stratford this week for a memorable Hamlet starring Jonathan Slinger as the Dane. There aren't many laughs in it but the one about the Brits never fails. Hamlet appears to be going mad and his stepfather packs him off to England. Why England? The gravedigger explains: "He shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, it's no great matter (because) there the men are as mad as he."

□□□□□□□□

NURSES are to be taught how to nurse. A nation rejoices. But while it may seem commonsense to put trainee nurses on wards and teach them the basics of feeding, washing and toilet care, there is one problem. It is the worrying fact that a certain percentage of the population are not caring people. And as anyone in the NHS will tell you, a number of these people, who should never be allowed within a mile of sick and vulnerable people, somehow gravitate into the medical profession, both on the wards and in management. They are brusque and unkind. But above all they are bullies and they can quickly browbeat and corrupt younger, better health workers. While the latest back-to-basics scheme is to be commended, it will not produce kinder wards until NHS bosses deal with the bullies.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Mike makes sure there are no costume dramas

WHILE most boys want to be professional footballers when they grow up, like film character Billy Elliot, Mike Capri knew his future lay in dancing.

After years on the stage, the 59-year-old from Kinver now has a costume business in Dudley which is in demand across the country. His business in Lye is packed with thousands of costumes. "Being surrounded by costumes every day is great and my favourite items are the showgirl outfits," he says. "We are one of the biggest companies in the country for showgirl costumes and dancewear and we send out hundreds of outfits across the country every week."

"The fact that I used to be a dancer helps as I make sure the costumes allow the wearer to move easily, rather than them just being skimpy."

Mike, who grew up in Wombourne, says he started having ballroom lessons when he was seven at the Lytton School of Dance in Penn.

Lucky

"I was a bit of a Billy Elliot because my father didn't agree with it," says Mike, who was a pupil at Blakeley Heath Primary and Ounsdale Schools. I did ballet and tap as well, and carried on with the school until I was 21 when I was lucky enough to get a place with Dougie Squires Second Generation dance group."

However, at just 5ft 6in Mike knew he would have to work harder with the professional company than anyone else just to get noticed.

"In those days the limit for a dancer was 5ft 9in and so I had to prove I was better than their best," says Mike. I had been doing choreography with West Bromwich Operatic Society since I was 18 and that started to snowball.

"Working with Dougie Squires was fantastic and among the highlights was being in Wozel Gummidge at Wembley and doing the Danny Lee Rue pario."

"It was hard work and long hours, but we had some great times and I got to work with lots of stars on the Jimmy Tarbuck Show, The Krankies



Mike's Triple C's Costumes has been in Lye for 20 years

Show and the Les Dawson show where I was head boy." Over the years Mike has worked with other famous names including Christopher Biggins, Roy Hudd and Bill Pertwee.

He was with Second Generation for almost 10 years and then went to work at Butlins in Clacton-on-Sea, Essex.

"I used to do choreography for the summer shows with people like Don Maclean, The Bachelors, Rod Hull & Emu as well as Keith Harris & Orville. However, I still used to come back to the West Midlands at the weekends to work with the amateur companies. I did my last dancing show when I was 40 and I said 'never again' due to hip problems." Twenty years ago Mike had a dance



Mike and another dancer the 1970s



Mike, right, in Les Dawson's house

group at The Kingfisher in Kingswinford, called Kingfisher Dancers, where he used to do showgirl-style performances.

Then Mike and two of the other dancers decided to set up a costume company and Triple C's Costumes has been based in Lye for 20 years.

"We started out with 100 costumes that were used in the show Anything Goes and now we have thousands of them," he says.

Mike says for every show the costumes have to be altered and when they come back to his store on Dudley Road repairs usually need to be made.

"I'm one of the lucky ones - I've been in show business for 35 years and have never been out of work, not many people can say that."

Motorists now face weeks of road jams

MOTORISTS have been warned of up to 18 weeks of traffic jams as a £250,000 roadworks scheme got under way near the Merry Hill Shopping Centre.

Temporary traffic lights will be in operation while South Staffordshire Water replaces underground pipes.

The work in Brierley Hill will result in the five-week closure of part of Dealeys Street and a lane closure on Thorns Road for two weeks.

South Staffordshire Water said the works were crucial.

One lane will be closed in Thorns Road between Acres Road and Mount Pleasant. There will be no entry into Acres Road and Thornhill Road from Thorns Road for around the next fortnight.

Deeley Street, near the Corn Exchange pub, will be partially closed for about five weeks from May 13 from the junction with Amblecote Road. Temporary traffic lights will be in use in Amblecote Road from May 13 until August.

Club relaunched

AROUND 40 businesses attended the breakfast club relaunched by Halesowen College. Rob Muir, from The Bottom Line Marketing Company, did a presentation on growing your business online at the Lyttleton Arms in Hagley. The next event is on April 17 at £15 per head. Call 0121 602 7862.



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Widow in fire tragedy is named

A WIDOW who died in a flat fire has been named as Maureen Shepherd.

The 64-year-old was found dead in her bed after a fire broke out at the block of flats at Baylie Court, Green Street, Stourbridge, last Friday.

An inquest held in Smethwick last week heard Mrs Shepherd, a widow, had worked as a jewellery polisher before her retirement and it was the jewellery she wore which family identified her by. Black Country coroner Robin Balmain told the hearing her family had not been able to view the body as a result of the effects of the fire.

The three chains, two pendants and three rings she wore, however, were recognised by her family members, as well as a recent hip replacement being matched between medical records and the pathologist's exam.

Mr Balmain said Mrs Shepherd lived alone but was visited by carers, one of whom had visited her only three hours before the blaze.

Mrs Shepherd was known to smoke about 100 cigarettes a week, Mr Balmain said. Mr Balmain adjourned the inquest to a date to be fixed for tests and further investigations.

Woman sheriff

A COLLEGE principal has become only the third woman to be installed as Sheriff of the West Midlands. Dame Christine Bradock from Kidderminster took on the mantle in a traditional ceremony in Birmingham.

Health bosses work to cut high hospital death rates

HEALTH bosses running Dudley's main hospital say they are taking action to reduce high death rates that prompted an investigation in the wake of the Stafford Hospital scandal.

The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, which runs Russells Hall Hospital, is one of 14 trusts across the country being investigated by NHS medical director, Professor Sir Bruce Keogh. Sir Bruce said the trusts face examination following the Francis Inquiry which highlighted failings in Mid-Staffordshire. Dudley Group medical director Dr Paul Harrison was quizzed by councillors in the borough at a meeting recently after they demanded an update and a swift response to tackle the issue.

Honour waits as Lenny busy

COMEDIAN Lenny Henry is to be formally presented with the Freedom of Dudley "within a couple of months" if plans go ahead, the borough's leader has said.

The star, born near Buffery Park in the town welcomed the honour saying it was "bostin' news".

Dudley Council leader Councillor David Sparks said while final arrangements were still being made the presentation was expected within two months.

"At the moment it is with Lenny's people. He not only has national but international commitments so it can take a while to get a date confirmed," he said.

"Everything is ready from the council's side of things and as soon as we get a date available to him we can make the final preparations.

"We are working on the assumption the formal presentation will be taking place within the next couple of months."

Lenny, who attended Blue Coat School and often tells stories of his childhood in the town during his routines, was first put forward for the honour last year.

Dr Harrison revealed staff had been "demoralised" when death rates were revealed but the trust was showing significant improvements in latest figures.

He said trust officials had been on a fact-finding mission to the North West to talk to health bosses in the area about how they improved death rates during his report to Dudley Council's health and adult social care scrutiny committee. Officials visited a health care quality improvement body called the Advancing Quality Alliance which includes members of the North West Strategic Health Authority. Dr Harrison said an action plan had been drawn up.

Presentations

Monthly presentations are now made by clinical departments to the trust chairman, chief executive, medical director and the new Clinical Commissioning Group to track any issues.

"We have made a significant effort. Substantial effects are now being seen - all our current indicators are within expected ranges," said Dr Harrison.

The number of patient deaths at the hospital was above expected levels in 2011/12, the Doctor Foster Hospital Guide found. At Dudley Group the hospital standardised mortality rating, which measures deaths while in hospital care, was 111.1 between April 2011 and March 2012. The expected level is 100. But Dr Harrison said latest available results from April to August 2012 show the trust is now meeting the 100 target.

Trader recovering after ordeal



Fruit merchant Stuart Timmins recovering in hospital after undergoing surgery

A FRUIT merchant has told of his terrifying ordeal after he was dragged along a road while trying to stop a man stealing his pick-up car and trailer.

Stuart Timmins has undergone an operation to his leg after it shattered as he fell during the dramatic theft from his business in Bird Street, Lower Gornal.

The 48-year-old father was left clinging to the driver's door of his Mitsubishi car as the thief sped away - driving around 1,000ft before Mr Timmins was forced to let go.

Mr Timmins had been in a warehouse at the William Timmins and Sons' yard when the thief picked up the car keys in an office and got in the vehicle, which had a trailer full of apples attached to it.

Mr Timmins underwent the operation at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham and expects to be off work for weeks having had pins inserted into his leg and a metal frame put around it.

He said: "It all happened so quick. I was in the warehouse and heard the car door shut. I rushed out and jumped on the side step to the driver's door.

"I saw him and he saw me - he started driving, speeding up to try and shrug me off and kept glancing round at me - he showed no expression and said nothing.

"I kept trying to smash the window to get to the ignition and made as much noise as possible. It was surreal. After I fell a lot of kind people came out and helped me."

NEWS in brief

Great expectations for Dickens show

THE Charles Dickens' classic Great Expectations will be retold later this month in a one man show played by his great great grandson.

Gerald Dickens will stage his performance at Nether-ton Arts Centre, Northfield Road, Netherton, on April 26.

The first show is 1.30pm and is for schools.

A performance at 7.30pm will be open to the public and tickets are on sale from Dudley Box Office on 01384 812812.

Tickets cost £11 for adults and £7 for children.

Towers group hits £1bn sales mark

THE theme park group that owns Alton Towers unveiled record profits and visitor numbers.

Despite the tough economic backdrop and the wettest UK summer on record Merlin Entertainment, which also owns Madame Tussauds, Sea Life Centres and a string of Legoland resorts, broke the £1bn sales mark for the first time.

Operating profit rose by 16.5 per cent to £258m from £222m in 2011.

Sacking tribunal

THE cases of four teachers sacked from Halesowen College have gone to tribunal. The four teachers, including college union man Dave Muritu, were sacked before Christmas and supporters went on strike. The hearings will be in Birmingham.

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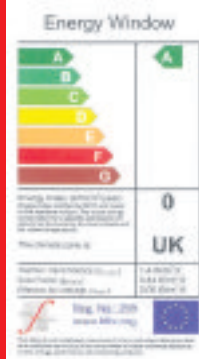
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NEWS FEATURE

IN MY VIEW

WITH
MARK
ANDREWS

COMMENTING on her latest wedding nuptials – the second in a month – glamour model-turned-“businesswoman” Katie Price was quoted as saying: “This will be my last.” For those of us who intently hang on to every one of her pearls of wisdom, these words are significant indeed.

At the same time, given that watershed announcement came at the end of a newspaper report, it begs the question of whether her sentence had been cut short.

And what she really said was: “This will be my last for this month.”

THE story about the 17-year-old who devised a smartphone app while revising for his exams, and then sold it to internet giant Yahoo for £20m, is fascinating and disturbing in equal measure.

Admittedly, part of my discomfort comes from the fact that I don't even know what a smartphone app is, let alone how to make £20m from one.

But if Nick D'Aloisio-Montilla is clever enough to persuade the great minds of Yahoo to part with such a sum of money, good luck to him. No doubt young Nick celebrated his good fortune with scones all round and lashings of ginger beer, but will the money really bring him happiness?

For most youngsters on the brink of adulthood, life is a journey of discovery, an exciting time of new experiences, triumphs and failures. But having made so much money so young, it is hard to see how anything he achieves from now will seem like anything other than a disappointment.

And there is something not quite right about a 17-year-old who talks in terms of “3D rendering” and “product road maps”.

It is a bit like the arguments about whether 16 and 17-year-olds should be given the right to vote. When I was 17, there were lots of things I was desperate to do, mostly involving cars and alcohol, although never together you understand, but I can't honestly say voting figured highly.

Any adolescent whose burning desire is to turn up at their local school and put a cross next to the name of their local councillor is surely reason enough to keep the voting age at 18.

AND if further proof was needed that we are turning into a nation of geeks, I could not believe my eyes by what I saw during a football match at the weekend.

No, not Aston Villa throwing away a promising lead with sloppy defending. It was the reaction of one home supporter when his side took the lead on 31 minutes. While most of the Villa fans were jumping around cheering, the chap sitting next to us barely seemed to notice.

He sat resolutely in his seat tapping frantically away at his mobile phone. It just shows how becoming a slave to technology can sap out even the most basic of joys.



Long caring arm of the law



It was not until 1918 that women could join the force and this is an early line-up including females



The long trousers of the law

Changing image of women in the police

Things have changed since woman were first allowed to join the police force as **CHARLOTTE LILLEY** finds out

WHEN she joined West Midlands Police force 20 years ago, Vanessa Eyles was issued with a handbag and stocking allowance.

Her uniform consisted of skirts and culottes and the force was predominantly dominated by men.

But today things are different and almost 60 per cent of police staff in the region are women and there are 138 female Special Constables.

To reflect their changing role, the force has released a collection of photographs from the past eight decades which show just how far women have come.

As Inspector Eyles, chair of West Midlands Police Association of Female Officers says, it's been a bumpy ride on the road to equality.

“Women have made such an advancement in the force and now have roles and ranks in all areas which is completely different to when I joined the force,” she says.

Equal

“I was issued with a police handbag and a stocking allowance as well as skirts and culottes, as one photograph shows.

“Thankfully, women are now classed as equal and the force no longer issues bags. The uniform is much better as men and women can now both wear trousers which is a lot more suitable.”

When they started out as officers in 1918, women had no powers of arrest and were not deemed worthy of being issued personal protective equipment.

Before they could join the force, they had to be 45 years old, as one photo taken around 1918 shows.

The image is of a group of mainly women officers believed to be among the first to have worn the uniform in the



From capes in the 1960 and culottes in the 1990s to the cycle cops of today

region. Another taken between 1918 and 1920, shows a matron at the central lock-up in Birmingham.

From 1850 onwards, policemen's wives worked voluntarily for the force, searching female prisoners and drunk women in custody.

“As they were not allowed to work, they often volunteered in stations, cooking for single policemen.

But in 1914, the force paid its first woman, Evelyn Miles, to act as matron at the central lock-up to supervise female prisoners.

She later went on to join the force as the first female police officer and rose to the rank of sergeant.

Insp Eyles says: “Things weren't much different when I was in the force.

There was still the mentality that women had their own role in the team and they had to deal with cases involving women and children.

“Similarly, if a man and a woman married within the force and had children, it was the wives who had to be the primary carer.

“Nowadays women can have children and still progress in their career within the force.”

Female officers eventually gained the powers of arrest in 1933 and 80 years later, they now account for more than 30 per cent of all officers, working in key roles across the force including firearms, response and command teams and in the dogs unit. Assistant Chief Constable Sharon Rowe is the highest ranking

female officer in the force. She has responsibility for local policing and goes above and beyond her role alongside her male colleagues.

She replaced Suzette Davenport who was recently appointed as Chief Constable of Gloucestershire Police.

“Sharon is a great officer and I have very high hopes for her, she will go far. Suzette is also really good which goes to show women can be just as good as men,” says Inspector Eyles.

But women still have a long way to go before they achieve complete equality as the number of female officers in the force is still not equal to the number of men, Inspector Eyles explains.

“To say there is absolute equality in the force in terms of the number of female officers wouldn't be true.

“The amount of women does not yet reflect the number of women in society, but that is our aim for the future.

Engage

“We want to be able to reflect the society we serve to the best of our ability.

“However, I do have to say that I think we are getting there.

“I can't imagine any organisation or public service not having any females in its team.

“Women have a different outlook to that of men and can really enrich a service's delivery. We are an integral part of the force.

“While on the beat, I believe that people may see women as much more approachable than male officers, enabling us to engage with the public better.

“I also think it is important to remember that we have a female Home Secretary, Theresa May, which just goes to show women really are making advances in the workplace and in particular, the police force.”

To view the full collection of photographs about female advancement within West Midlands Police, visit <http://www.flickr.com/photos/westmidlandspolice>

THROUGH THE YEARS

1983...

A YOUNG policeman on the beat got more than he bargained for after turning midwife when a mum-to-be went in to labour.

Elizabeth Fraser was expecting only one baby, but PC William Earle found himself delivering twins.

TALKS to end a strike at the Lucas Aerospace factory in Wolverhampton ground to a halt after workers rejected the terms offered by the company. The strike began on April 5 after 900 manual workers downed tools after a row over new technology.

POLICE officers smashed down a front door to rescue one man and his dog from a fire at Rubery, near Birmingham.

Sgt Peter Blake and Pc Paul Bott lead Keith Smith and his Labrador to safety after drying clothes fell on to a gas fire.

1993...

A £1.5 MILLION housing development for the elderly was opened in the site of Wolverhampton's wartime airport.

Cresswell Court offered 40 one-bedroom apartments with door entry security and guest accommodation.

EASTER came early for youngsters at a Wolverhampton hospital who received a 3ft egg from the Easter Bunny. Children at New Cross Hospital were given the 28lb egg by advertising agency Colley Slater Brooker.

A WOLVERHAMPTON mother snatched her sleeping son from his bed as hot water rained down on him from a flat above his bedroom. Mandy Robinson fought her way through the steam engulfing eight-year-old Daniel's room to grab him from his hot soaking bed.

2003...

WOLVERHAMPTON'S famous tramp Josef Stawinoga had his tent replaced by the council, but he was not happy. The Polish war veteran, known as ‘Fred’, had lived on the central reservation on St John's ring road for more than 35 years. When asked about his new abode, Fred said in Polish: “I am not interested in another tent.”

SCORES of youngsters abandoned their street hang outs in favour of a newly-opened ball court in Low Hill, Wolverhampton.

The multi-ball court featured football, basketball and netball provision and was being used by up to 40 children every night.

WOLVERHAMPTON'S oldest women celebrated her 108th birthday – and she put it all down to getting plenty of rest.

Hilda Tudor enjoyed a celebration at Springfield Residential Home in Oaken Drive, Codsall and received a greeting from the Queen.

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LETTERS

Government has no compassion

WHERE are justice, compassion and fairness?

When it comes to "the bedroom tax" my view is the Tories and their followers, the Liberals, are quite simply devoid of compassion.

I was though, gladdened that the Bishop of Dudley and 42 other bishops expressed deep concern about the Welfare Benefits Up-Rating Bill.

In the coalition cabinet, 23 out of 29 members are millionaires. One can't help but wonder if any of these senior politicians actually understand what misery their decisions bring to people.

Maybe they do realise, and they just

don't care. One thing for sure, is that whilst protecting their wealthy friends, such as bankers, they seem intent on making life worse for the elderly, the sick, the disabled and anyone else who does not possess great wealth.

I find it hard to imagine the dark, cruel minds that conjure up a scheme which takes even more money from lower income families such as those who need housing benefit.

It really is a policy which makes the rich richer and the poor poorer. Yet at Easter, the same politicians will walk into churches and proclaim themselves Christians and give thanks for all the

Lord has given to them. What would Jesus Christ have said to these millionaire politicians about attacking the more vulnerable members of our society?

The "bedroom tax" is indeed a political act. However, it really is not a question of what is right or left, but more about what is right and wrong.

Justice, compassion and fairness are words I wish I could associate with the present government, but sadly I cannot. I would ask everyone to oppose the "bedroom tax".

C STOLL
Brier Mill Road, Halesowen

Looking for those who served on the carriers

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This year we will be at the Royal Beach, Southsea, on Saturday, May 11. Membership is £8 per annum. Enquiries to Leigh Easton, Glenmoray, Hayford, P1, Cambusbarrow, Stirling, FK7 9JX, or email at ngsfo@tiscali.co.uk or visit our website at www.bulwarkassoc.co.uk

LEIGH EASTON
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LETTERS to the Editor

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Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number of the writer. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

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Politicians thinking it's good to destroy

THIS morning I watched the MP for Halesowen struggling to justify the welfare reforms relating to housing. He stated that too many people in social housing have under-utilised dwellings, meaning they have too many bedrooms.

The Government thinks it is shocking that all those bedrooms are going to waste. What is more shocking is that they propose to move people who have lived in their communities for years into far off places away from their friends and relations because they have too many bedrooms.

The MP for Halesowen thinks it is fine to destroy communities in this way. I am aware the Tories have moved politically to the right, but this is bordering on the policies of Germany in the 1930s. The real problem of course is that there is not enough social housing, but the Conservatives will not admit that. Why? Because it was the Thatcher government that stopped councils from building social housing estates 30 years ago. That is why we have a housing crisis now, not because there are too many bedrooms!

M CLIFF
Holcroft Road
Wall Heath

How is Ed going to rescue a decade?

SO Ed Miliband says he can rescue the lost decade. How strange then, that seven of those years saw Ed Miliband's party in Government.

How then is he able to say now that he can rescue the decade? Surely he could have said to both Tony Blair and Gordon Brown that he believed that they had got it all wrong. Why when in power was he so quiet?

Points scoring seems to be what politics is about nowadays and not constructive government.

Perhaps Nigel Farage is right. Career politicians have no real idea of what life is really about. Maybe it would be best if politicians had to serve an apprenticeship of about 20 years in businesses both large and small and find from this how difficult things really are, especially for small businesses.

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NEWS

Businesses are backing battle for Hippodrome

MORE than a dozen businesses have pledged their support to campaigners fighting to save Dudley Hippodrome from demolition.

Taxi drivers, hotels and High Street stores are among those rallying behind the Friends of Dudley Hippodrome.

It is the latest attempt by campaigners to reveal the strength of feeling by business owners who say there are wider benefits of reopening the 1930s theatre.

Group spokesman Geoff Fitzpatrick said he was delighted so many traders had signed up to back the bid.

Among those to support the campaign are bosses at the landmark Station Hotel opposite the former theatre, where many public meetings have been held.

Deputy manager Jason Lewis-Young said the hotel, where many of the performers such as George Formby once stayed, was behind the campaigners.

"We are fully supporting them all the way because we can see that the Hippodrome would bring wider benefits to town," he said.

"Places like the Black Country Living Museum, the zoo and the caverns are the gems of Dudley and we should be passionate about anything that would help bring more people to Dudley."

Other businesses backing the group are Harpers Florists and John Green Butchers in the Fountain Arcade, off the High Street.

Dudley Council's planning department is yet to make a decision on the application to demolish the building.

Casting for the future



Ian Austin MP chats to apprentices Nathan Tucker, left, and Aaron Miles at the college which is offering course in metal casting

APPRENTICES will be able to learn one of the oldest metalwork techniques thanks to new courses in Dudley.

Casting skills are going to be taught at Dudley College, which is working with the manufacturing industry.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin met new recruits on the course who have started training at one of the borough's well-known companies.

He joined staff at bathroom products manufacturer Thomas Dudley Ltd for the launch of the two-year course, marking National Apprenticeship Week.

He said: "At a time when almost a million young people are unemployed, it's great to see local youngsters being given the chance to develop the skills needed to take the hi-tech, highly-skilled jobs of the future."

Thomas Dudley has helped develop the course in partnership with others including Charter Castings, Boro Foundry Ltd, Castin Plc, JJ Siddons and the Institute of Cast Metal Engineers. So far, nine apprentices have started and are employed by the engineering companies within the partnership.

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NEWS

Tim bangs the drum



Tim Rogers, of Stourbridge, who has launched a music school for youngsters which uses the Cajon, a box drum. A DRUMMER is hoping to inspire the next generation of Black Country beaters by giving youngsters the chance to learn basic rhythms.

Tim Rogers has set up a mobile music school, called Fun on a Drum, aimed at giving children aged seven to 10 the confidence to take up an instrument.

Using a simple box drum, the Cajon, Mr Rogers is able to teach youngsters basic rhythms and even how to play in a group. The 42-year-old said Fun on a Drum could be booked for school and community centre visits and even children's parties.

He developed the idea after seeing his nine-year-old daughter Tess playing the instrument and realising it was a fun and easy way to get children interested in music.

Mr Rogers, of Stourbridge, has been a drummer for 30 years. He plays in a folk band called Kim Lowings and The Greenwood, which has recently recorded an album.

"I have played regular drum kits but at the moment I mainly play the Cajon," he said. "Because the drums are only boxes they can be transported easily which means I can visit schools and other places for workshops and events. The Cajon is an easy way to learn about music."

"The aim is to give children a glimpse into playing an instrument which they will want to build on."

For more information on Fun on a Drum call 01384 485251 or 07910 375741.

Solution on badgers will have to wait for red tape

LONG-term action will not be taken to deal with badgers blighting a Dudley cul-de-sac until new Government guidelines have been agreed.

Residents in The Haven, Wordsley, have long campaigned for measures as gardens are uprooted. The animals have also burrowed out setts in a sandstone bank near to homes, causing large amounts of debris to fall to the ground.

But residents face a further wait for long-term action to deal with the situation despite having to put up with the problem for years.

Dudley Council said it was waiting for guidelines from the Government and Natural England before deciding on the most appropriate way forward.

The authority has been monitoring the situation and reported no significant disruption between August and November last year.

But residents say in recent months their gardens have been damaged again and debris from the sandstone bank has started to again pile up on one driveway. They have called on the council to find a way of tackling the problem in the long-

term.

But Councillor Khurshid Ahmed, said while monitoring would continue there was little else which could presently be done.

"Regular surveys will be carried out but in the meantime we are continuing to wait for guidelines from the Government and Natural England," he said.

"Then we will be able to decide on the most appropriate way forward."

Resident Lorraine Price, 81, said she was "not surprised" no action would be taken in the near future.

"I have been contacted by the council and they have agreed to remove the pile of sandstone which has gathered," she said. "However, that doesn't really solve the problem. I suppose we will have to wait and see what guidelines are agreed."

by Lee Watton



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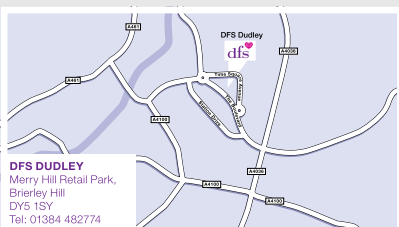
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Lipton's shop on the corner of Queen Square and Exchange Street shortly before the Second World War



Darlington Street after the First World War where James Beattie was acquiring premises during the 1920s



Mr Preece's shop in Collingwood Road, Low Hill, pictured after the Second World War



Shoppers enjoy the newly-built Wulfrun Centre in 1970

Looking at century of changes to shopping

AN exhibition at Wolverhampton's Bantock House Museum is taking a historic look at the shops and eating places of the city.

Open All Hours opened on January 16 and runs until May 5. It will examine how the high street has changed throughout history. After the First World War, chain stores including Sainsbury's, Maypole, Liptons and the Fifty Shilling Tailor began to appear in the town centre and shoppers were spoilt for choice with billboards advertising Bovril, Pearl Soap and Ovaltine.

In the 1920s, James Beattie acquired premises in Darlington Street and after Victoria Street was widened, he began a major rebuild of the Beatties store.

By 1936 unemployment was down to two million, more people were

by Charlotte Lilley

earning money and factories were struggling to keep up with the demand for radios, cars and electrical goods including the first television sets.

But at the end of the Second World War shortages and rationing dominated post-war retailing and shops including Mr Preece's Grocery Shop on Collingwood Road, Low Hill, had limited stock to create lavish window displays.

The Queen's Coronation in 1953 marked the beginning of a new era and business began to pick up for shops in Lichfield Street, Broad Street and Stafford Road as they hung flags outside to enjoy the occasion.

By 1959, the wholesale fruit and vegetable market was in full swing and the indoor Saturday market attracted wives and mothers who

during the week were tied to the house and children. Both markets were often held responsible for causing congestion in Wulfrun Street so a new market was built in 1968 in School Street but this has since moved to Salop Street.

The Wulfrun Centre, off Dudley Street, was built in 1969 and increased the number of big-name chain stores in the town.

For the first time, shoppers were able to buy the latest in 60s and 70s fashion, entertainment and novelty goods.

In August 1998, work began on a 13-month project to revitalise the centre.

Ambitious plans for a £25 million pound investment in the city centre were unveiled last June.

It is hoped the new development will pave the way for more shops in the hope of attracting major retailers and even more shoppers.



Staff at Charles Warner's shop celebrate the Queen's Coronation



Wolverhampton Market in 1959 was responsible for congestion

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NEWS

Masked robber steals pensioners' heirlooms

A MASKED raider threatened two frail pensioners in their own home before stealing precious photographs and a family heirloom.

Relatives of the victims have issued a heartfelt appeal for the return of the treasured items.

Police said the burglar entered the house, close to the former Dudley College Castle View Campus, and threatened the two brothers, aged 87 and 90, who are both housebound.

One of the men was pushed to the floor and the raider rifled through his pockets before turning his attention to searching other rooms in the house.

The intruder ran away after stealing a wooden police truncheon, which was given to the family as a gift in 1946.

Family photos and a passport were also stolen in the burglary, which happened at around 8.30pm on March 17.

The victims' niece, Joy from Sedgley, who asked to only be known by her first name for fear of reprisals, described the attack as cowardly.

"We received a phone call to say my uncles' house had been burgled and were distraught," she said.

"I don't understand why anyone would want to do this. They are so vulnerable."

"They are very independent, proud men who have worked hard all their lives and to be treated like this is terrible. Treasured family photos were taken and we would really like to get them back." Anyone with information is asked to call police on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Virgin set to keep going

VIRGIN Trains looks set to carry on running services on the West Coast Main Line for another four years. Under a new franchise timetable announced by Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin, a new West Coast franchise will not start until April 2017, with Virgin negotiating to continue running it until then.

Celebrating anniversary



Asda Community Life Champion Sophie Smith at the store with representatives of the charities

CHARITIES in Dudley gathered for a party celebrating the first anniversary of a community scheme launched by a supermarket.

Lisa Southall, aged 39, of Wall Heath, became Community Life Champion for the Asda store at Dudley's Merry Hill Shopping Centre when the initiative was launched last year.

As part of the role she works with charities and community groups alongside visiting schools to raise awareness of working in the community.

An anniversary celebration was held at the store last week attended

by charities helped by the scheme. These included the Royal British Legion, Stourbridge's Mary Stevens Hospice and Dudley's White House charity.

The event also celebrated the launch of a scheme where shoppers choose a good cause to support by placing a token in the appropriate box inside the store.

Lisa said: "I have really enjoyed the past year and it has been great working in the community and helping charities. It was wonderful to bring everyone together for the celebration and I am delighted people were able to attend."

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NEWS

Group is looking for answers on future of home

FRESH calls for the future of a care home to be revealed have been made by protesters. Campaigners fighting to save New Bradley Hall in Kingswinford from closure forced councillors to back down over proposals to shut one of Dudley's last remaining council-run care homes. The New Bradley Hall

Retuning is a possibility

PEOPLE may need to retune Freeview equipment after changes to digital services at a transmitter.

Freeview television or box users receiving a digital signal may lose reception on April 10 as work is done on Wrekin transmitters to allow for new services in future, including 4G mobile broadband.

Services affected include BT Vision, TopUp TV and You View services. Satellite and cable services will not be affected. For information go to www.digitaluk.co.uk

Action Group were invited to join a stakeholder group last year by the new ruling Labour group.

But leading protestor Mac Scott said only one meeting has been held with council bosses since last September amid growing concerns their views were not being heard.

Mr Scott, whose mother-in-law Irene Claridge lives at the home, demanded answers while addressing a health and adult social care committee at Dudley Council House.

Adult social care boss, Councillor Steve Waltho, said at the meeting, "These good residents will be at New Bradley Hall for the foreseeable future. We are respecting that. We are looking at other options at keeping New Bradley open."

New wheelie bins will start being delivered to homes

NEW wheelie bins for household rubbish will be delivered to residents across Dudley from this summer.

Each household will receive a new wheelie bin during the course of the next 18 months. The scheme will run alongside a wider £1.8 million scheme to make improvements aimed at boosting recycling in the Dudley area.

Two new reusable recycling bags – one blue and one green – are also going to be handed out to homeowners to enable them to recycle plastic bottles, cardboard and paper.

This is in addition to the black boxes already in use for kerbside collections of glass bottles and jars.

Blue bags will be for paper and card, while green bags are for collecting plastic bottles and cans.

Dudley Council environment boss Councillor Tracy Wood said that plans were in the pipeline to start delivering the wheelie bins to homes within the coming weeks.

Everyone should have the new bins, which are strictly for non-recyclable waste only, by summer 2014.

A leaflet will be delivered to households detailing the new service and changes.

Councillor Wood said: "Providing a

by Andrew Turton

wheelie bin service will enable us to make more efficient collections while reducing the risk of bags splitting or being ripped open by animals.

"We know our residents value the recycling service, which scored very highly in the Big Question consultation, and that's why we're making these important improvements."

Wheelie bins are being funded through savings from the original sack service.

Improvements to the kerbside recycling services are being funded by a successful bid for £1.8m of funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Pupils' travels to the Orient



Hagley Primary School pupils off to China

A DOZEN children from a primary school near Stourbridge have travelled to China for the trip of a lifetime over the Easter break.

A group of pupils and staff from Hagley Primary, Park Road, Hagley, are visiting their partner school, Yangzhou Wenhe Primary School in Yangzhou until Sunday, April 7.

The youngsters are staying with host families in Yangzhou for their visit, so they can make the most of the opportunity to gain an understanding of Chinese life and culture.

When they are not attending Yangzhou Wenhe Primary School to work on projects, the Hagley students will visit local places of interest, such as Slender West Lake. Head Kevin Bailey said: "It's a wonderful opportunity for our students to gain experience of Chinese culture."

Retune on 10 April if you are missing TV channels



Freeview* services may be subject to disruption on Wednesday 10 April. Services should return to normal by late afternoon. If at this stage you find you are still missing channels, retune using your remote control to get them back.

For help with retuning or to check predicted changes to your TV reception, go to digitaluk.co.uk/granada or call 08456 50 50 50**

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*Freeview TV services are available to nearly all UK homes. Freeview TV services includes BT Vision, Top Up TV and You View. Coverage is subject to variation.
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NEWS

Market traders calling for more talks on plans

TRADERS on Dudley's historic market have called for more talks with council officials over multi-million pound redevelopment plans.

Proposals for a £6 million overhaul of the market in the heart of the town are in the pipeline alongside a stall rent freeze for 12 months in a bid to boost traders and bring more customers to the high street.

But Dudley Market Traders' Association have called for stallholders to be more involved in discussions.

Group chairman Len Lenihan, in a statement on behalf of stallholders, said members were promised talks relating to the construction of the stalls, fixtures and fittings, following the original public consultation.

But Mr Lenihan says the talks with regeneration boss Councillor Shaukat Ali and the council's assistant director for economic regeneration and transportation Phil Coyne have failed to progress.

"We fear that another white elephant may appear on Dudley's High Street to rival the entertainment square on Stone Street," he said. "A thriving market place requires two elements: A market stall fit for purpose and, more importantly, market traders willing to trade."

"Traders fear their concerns over construction issues have fallen on deaf ears. It has been intimated that disruption to trade could last for 18 months with traders being moved to temporary stalls. Ultimately, market traders' livelihoods are at stake, as well as the town centre's well-being."

Vintage dray to do rounds

A BREWER'S vintage horse-drawn dray will be delivering beer around the village of Kinver on May 18. The Dray Day event is part of the build up to the annual Kinver Country Fair on Sunday, June 16. Kinver Brewery is organising the event with the dray in High Street at noon and 2pm and visiting the Kinver Rock Houses, Compton Road at 3pm.

Walkers raise £5,000



Hilary Croydon, Denise Hudson and Janet Hutchinson, of the Rainbow Breast group who raised money to buy hospital equipment

GENEROUS fundraisers who strolled around a West Midlands beauty spot for charity have donated £5,000 for breast cancer patients.

Members of The Rainbow Breast Reconstruction Group, Dudley raised the cash for a vital piece of machinery for the Breast Care Unit at Russells Hall Hospital.

The group, formed by Denise Hudson and Deb Barnett around six years ago, collected the money from their latest fundraising walk.

More than 200 walkers took part in the event at Bodenham Arboretum, near Kidderminster, last Easter, raising £12,795 in total for good causes. Around £6,000 has

already been donated to the Dudley Cancer Support charity while a further £1,000 was given to the hospital to help cancer research.

Now fundraisers have handed over another cash sum to staff at the hospital's Breast Care Unit to buy a lymphoedema perometer machine.

It is able to aid in the assessment of lymphoedema, which often develops as a side effect of cancer treatment, up to 10 months earlier than normal.

Mrs Hudson, who lives in Stourton, near Stourbridge, said: "It is lovely to think we have raised this much because the community came together and gave something back."

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Tony Hardiman goes on to say "We don't know how long the scheme will be available for so it's vitally important that those households that think they may be eligible should call us straight away to avoid disappointment – it's free and could make all the difference between a cold home – or a warm one."

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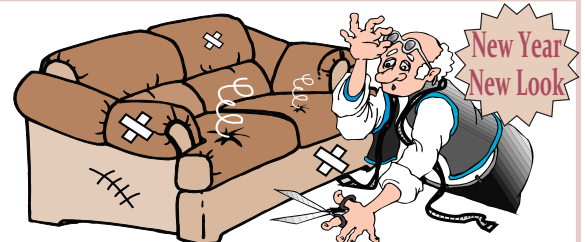
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Immigrant to be sent home over drug farm

AN illegal immigrant caught growing hundreds of cannabis plants in a three-bedroom house in Dudley has been jailed.

Thuan Ba-Dau was a "gardener" looking after the 470 plants when police raided the house in Worcester Road, Netherton, last month. The 34-year-old was jailed for 14 months at Wolverhampton Crown Court after admitting growing the class B drug.

The court heard how Ba-Dau had been employed to look after the drugs factory after spending £8,000 on travel from Vietnam last July.

He will be deported following his release. Sentencing him, Recorder Richard Bond said he had been taken advantage of as part of the operation to grow the drugs. Mr Mukhtar Ubhi, defending Ba-Dau, said: "Unfortunately he found himself in this circumstance. He is looking forward to going back."

£200,000 expansion at Holden's hits new delay

A £200,000 project to expand a Black Country brewery has hit further delays with work now due for completion in July or August – months later than originally planned.

Construction of the three-storey extension at Holden's Brewery, Woodsetton, started in October to allow an increase in production from 50,000 pints to 75,000 pints per week. Work was originally expected to finish in December but this was put back until the end of March after plans were changed from a two-storey to a three-storey development.

Bosses at the family-run firm say the completion date has now been delayed a second time with a finish in July or August.

They admitted the scheme had taken "more time than first thought" but stressed it would be well worth it once completed. New storage tanks are being created including one to hold 70,000 pints.

These will start operating soon after work on the extension is complete. Lucie Holden, who runs the firm with brother Jonothan and sister Abi, said: "It has taken a little longer than we originally planned."

"Our team working on the project have to carry out repairs and maintenance at other sites as well and this has held things up."

"We are now expecting the project to be finished by July or August. This is still acceptable within the timescales set out."

by Lee Watton

The firm got permission for a three-storey extension at its George Street premises in July 2012. Alongside the tank, two fermenting vessels are in the project.

Bosses decided on the extension after a rise in demand for ale. Expansion plans include exporting one beer, the Golden Special, to Japan. Further work is expected to take place over coming years with plans for a new visitors centre and brewery tours.

The firm is one of the oldest in the area and was founded in 1915.

Other developments that have been completed include a new bottle store, which is open for visitors to buy beers and merchandise, and new offices.



The Bottle Shop and reception at Holden's Brewery

Private operator option over new centre car park

A PROPOSED multi-storey car park creating hundreds of new spaces in Dudley could be operated by a private company rather than the council as originally planned.

Dudley Council announced the scheme last year following repeated calls by traders for more parking in the town centre.

Schemes welcomed

A BOSS at Dudley Building Society has welcomed two help schemes for homebuyers announced by the Government.

George Osborne unveiled a £3.5 billion investment in government loans to financially stretched homebuyers and a £12bn scheme to increase access to mortgages.

Society chief executive Jeremy Wood, said: "Extending the support given to those seeking to get on to the housing ladder will widen the availability of loan finance beyond just new homes."

An offer made by car park firm NCP to create new spaces in relation to the plan was turned down as the authority wanted to retain full control of the development.

It was feared an independent company would introduce its own parking charges and these would be higher than council fees.

However, Dudley Councillor Shaikat Ali said plans for the multi-storey were now being held with private firms over the car park plan.

Councillor Ali said plans for the multi-storey were "progressing", with a feasibility study being worked up for the project. He said part of that was looking at whether it would be more effective if it were to be run privately.

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NEWS

NEWS

in brief

Chloe is fur game for lynx research

A BIG cat being housed at Dudley Zoo is contributing towards a European endangered species research project investigating the captive lynx.

Fur from 15-year-old Eurasian lynx Chloe have gone to researchers at Liberec Zoo in the Czech Republic for analysis.

It was taken using special tape. Registrar and research co-ordinator, Dr David Beeston, said: "The tape is put around the door, so when Chloe passes through her fur sticks to it."

DNA will be taken from Chloe's fur, which will be used to find out whether she is a sub-specific hybrid or a pure-bred member of one of the 10 Eurasian lynx sub-species in the world.

Awards final for apprentice Kerry

A STOURBRIDGE College electrical apprentice was a finalist in a national construction competition.

Kerry Hyland was in the final of the "Best Apprentice/New Starter" in the 25 and over category in the Women in Construction Awards.

The 29-year-old previously worked in retail and hospitality.

£1.3m work bid

A BID for £1.3million to revamp a junction on the Birmingham New Road, Colesey, to help ease congestion has gone in. Work could get under way on widening the Shaw Road junction in July if the funding application is approved.

Rescued horse was almost set on fire by callous yobs

TWO horses, one which was doused in diesel and petrol and narrowly avoided being set alight by yobs, are among the latest strays rescued as part of a new project.

Welfare officers working on behalf of Dudley Council rescued the young colt from land in Sedgley after nearby residents raised the alarm. Horse rescue firm Equine Emergency Services (EES) has been employed by the council to work alongside West Midlands Police to tackle the problem of strays. Dudley Council revealed it had spent almost £150,000 on rounding up more than 250 stray horses in the past two years. It comes as horse welfare remains a top priority with an increased concern by residents spotting neglected animals.

Fiasco blow to small firm

THE fiasco over the West Coast rail franchise has left a small transport firm with a £70,000 VAT debt and on the brink of being wound up by the High Court.

The firm behind Parry People Movers rail cars - used on the Stourbridge Junction-Stourbridge Town service - was in the High Court in a HM Revenue & Customs case.

Chairman John Parry blamed financial difficulties on the botched West Coast Main Line franchise, which, he said, caused a "knock-on effect". The Department for Transport put all franchise deals on hold after having to tear up plans to strip Virgin Trains of the West Coast line.

Errors were made by civil servants, and the Government faces a £100 million compensation bill. Although deals on which Mr Parry and colleagues worked had nothing to do with Virgin, they were still held up as the department reassessed franchise processes.

Mr Parry said they were chasing a contract to generate cashflow but it failed to materialise due to West Coast problems.

Cradley Heath-based JPM Parry and Associates got a 56-day reprieve at court for time to try to raise cash via shareholders to pay the bill before the May deadline.

Mr Parry said the future of services on the Stourbridge shuttle, run by train operator London Midland, would be unaffected.

Hundreds of horses have been rounded up from roads and neighbouring land, especially in Dudley and Sandwell, in recent months.

A spokeswoman for EES, who wished to stay anonymous for fear of reprisals, said the young colt covered in fuel was battling back to health.

"This colt was doused in diesel and petrol before residents reported children trying to set him on fire," she said.

"He is still in a process of recovery as the fuels saturated him and caused severe skin disorders. He is very strong willed and fighting to make a full recovery from this dreadful ordeal."

Successful

A second horse was rescued from Wallows Road, Pensnett, by EES. Dudley Councillor Tracy Wood said the firm has been successful in removing animals which would otherwise suffer and be a potential cause of accidents.

West Midlands Police are able to seize the horses found on the public highway, pursuing criminal action where appropriate and handing the animal over to the EES.

Once a horse is in the care of the service it is seen by a vet and checked for microchips to trace its owner.

EES and Dudley Council say they have a 99 per cent success rate, with all horses nursed back to health, rehabilitated, passed on and microchipped before being found suitable homes.

Doctor's drainpipe limbs help



Surgeon Viquar Qurashi helping young children from war torn Syria at a refugee camp on the Turkish border

A DUDLEY doctor has helped people from war-torn Syria with limbs made from drainpipes.

Orthopaedic surgeon Viquar Qurashi helped more than 114 amputees over ten days at one of the conflicts largest refugee camps in Reyhanli, near the Turkish-Syrian border.

Using melted down plastic drainpipes donated by Turkish firms the Russells Hall Hospital surgeon built new limbs with the help of six technicians from Pakistan.

"The limbs made from drainpipes are not as sophisticated as a western limb but a prosthetic limb costing up to a £1,000 here in Britain will be of little use to someone who doesn't have the money, technology and tools to maintain it," he said.

"We can make limbs from drainpipe material for £30 and provide them free to those in need."

He went to Syria after being asked by the Syrian British Medical Society and two Syrian colleagues.

Mr Qurashi, has fitted more than 3,000 limbs over the past seven years to amputees in Pakistan as part of his own non-profit organisation, Naya Qadam Trust, which helps fund the artificial limb materials.

Homes on offer are for older tenants

HOMES for pensioners have become available at two sheltered housing schemes based in Halesowen.

Individual flats at Holloway Court, Colley Gate, Cradley, and Margaret Vine Court, Hurst Green, have own front doors, kitchen, lounge, bedroom and toilet.

Holloway Court, Beecher Place, opened in 1970 and Margaret Vine Court, Moat Drive, opened two years after. Properties are self-contained with gas central heating, lifts and three staircases.

The council says both schemes offer options for older people wanting to live independently but liking support offered from communal living.

Staff are on hand for help if required and all properties are linked to a 24 hour monitoring centre. There is also a secure door entry system, laundry facilities, gardens, a range of assisted and independent bathing facilities and communal lounges where tenants can hold social activities.

Bake Off date

BUDDING bakers can compete on April 20 at the Great Dudley Bake Off as part of the town's St George's Day celebrations. Mayor, Councillor Melvyn Mottram will judge a competition open to all from a first come first serve basis. He hopes competitors will donate entries to a charity cake sale for his charities.

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Halesowen

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TUESDAY**Hasbury/Halesowen**

Christian Fellowship
26 Albert Road
9.30am & 11.30am
Tel: Michaela
0121 602 3267

Halesowen

Lutley Community Centre,
Brook Willow Road,
5.30pm & 7.30pm
Tel: Michaela
0121 602 3267

Oldbury

Sainsbury's (Savacentre)
Freeth Street,
6pm & 7.15pm
Tel: Ann 0121 422 3296

TUESDAY**Rowley Regis**

Disability Centre,
Rowley Village,
5.30pm & 7.30pm
Tel: Kenton 07982 408088

WEDNESDAY**Blackheath**

Central Methodist Church
High Street, 10am, 4pm
& 6pm Tel: Ann
0121 422 3296

Old Hill

Holy Trinity Church,
Halesowen Road,
5.30pm & 7.30pm
Tel: Jill 01384 562102

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0121 5506414

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Halesowen

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Meatballs come back

MEATBALLS are back on the menu at Ikea after being pulled when traces of horse meat were discovered in them.

Sales, halted after contaminated meat was found in a batch exported to the Czech Republic, began again recently. Horse meatballs, labelled as beef and pork, were in frozen packs sent to Ikea stores there.

"It is clear that IKEA Group, despite high standards, has failed to live up to our customers' expectations," said Ikea global food manager Edward Mohr.

Ikea has cut its meat suppliers from 15 to seven.

Ibstock Brick goes on

IBSTOCK brick factory is to remain in use for the near future despite operations being wound down at the site.

Ibstock Brick announced the closure of its base in Tansey Green Road, Kingswinford, last July blaming the move on a decline in the demand for bricks.

But a small number of workers still remain at the site eight months after the announcement was first made and despite operations being scaled down.

Bosses have said the situation would continue for the time being as workers are needed to continue dispatching remaining products to customers and maintain site security.

A date has still to be set for when the factory. Consultation took place with the 31 employees following the announcement the factory was to close.

Around 10 staff were redeployed to other local factories operated by Ibstock. The firm blamed closure of the factory on tough trading conditions.

Officials said the drop in business had been ongoing and had forced bosses to have a rethink on how the firm operated.

Group marketing manager for Ibstock Brick, Andrew Halstead-Smith said, there was no closure date set.

"The staff which have been retained on site are continuing to work to dispatch remaining products to customers and maintain site security," he said.

"There is no further change to the situation at the present time."

The company was formed in the 1800s and has run the factory, in Kingswinford, for several years.

It is one of more than 20 bases the firm runs across the UK. The firm also has factories in Aldridge and Cannock.

When the closure of the Kingswinford base was announced, bosses said the aim was to maintain "optimum operational efficiency" at the remaining factories.

In Dudley alone there used to be 25 brick works but the heavy clay industry suffered a blow brought on by low levels of demand for building materials across the country and the burden of energy taxes and the volatility in wholesale energy prices.

Students pitch in to give popular hall a revamp

A POPULAR community hall in Dudley has been given a revamp, thanks to students on a Prince's Trust programme run by City of Wolverhampton College.

A total of 15 young people, aged 16 to 25, took on the redecoration of the Richardson Hall in Lawnswood Road, Wordsley, for a two-week community project as part of their 12-week team scheme.

The students smartened up the main hall, kitchen and toilets of the centre with a new lick of paint after raising more than £700 to buy decorating materials.

They packed bags for shoppers at a local supermarket, endured a leg wax, and were even sponsored to sit in a bath

of baked beans outside the hall. Janet Blakeway, chairwoman of Wordsley and District Community Association which manages the hall, said: "City of Wolverhampton College and the Prince's Trust could have no finer students."

"For two weeks they sanded, masked, painted and cleaned to a really professional standard and their hard work, team spirit and sense of humour was greatly appreciated."

"We now have a hall that, once again, we can be proud of."

For more information about schemes visit www.wolvcoll.ac.uk/princetrust or call the Prince's Trust office on 01902 821906.

Black Jack enjoys new home



Black Jack is now enjoying freedom at his new home in Wales after being rescued

A DONKEY abandoned in a tatty sheep trailer on a Dudley estate has found a new home and a loving family after being rescued by a charity.

The animal, named Black Jack, had been hidden in the trailer on the Russells Hall estate, and was barely able to move in the confined space. Officials from Donkey Rescue UK said the three-year-old animal had been kept in the soiled trailer for about a week. The charity took action after receiving a tip-off from a member of the public.

Bosses had to pay for him to be handed over to them but have said it had been worth it to ensure Black Jack could be found a new home.

He has now been rehomed in Wales to a couple experienced in looking after donkeys and is loved and cared for, the charity said. Amanda Ball, founder, said: "The poor donkey was terrified and we believe he had been kept in the trailer for about a week."

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CLUB NEWS

Hospice recipient of funds

QUARRY BANK E TWG

The AGM of Quarry Bank TG was held on March 19.

Detailed reports were given by the secretary and the treasurer. Both ladies were thanked for their most comprehensive accounts and also for their work throughout the year.

The guild was told that this year it had gained three extra members. It is hoped that they will enjoy our meetings and activities.

Chairman Mrs Wright informed members that a letter has been received from Mary Stevens Hospice thanking the guild for its donation. The money was handed over as a result of last year's charity efforts.

Social Secretary Mrs Whittle gave final arrangements for the birthday lunch which was taking place on Tuesday March 26 at the Mill Hotel.

A visit to Cotswold Lavender is being organised for June 25. The visit will include a walk in the lavender fields and a visit to the lavender gift shop and tearoom.

Speaker for the evening was one of the guild's own members, Mrs Cartwright, who talked about her own Black Country childhood in the years between the wars.

The evening concluded with tea and cakes provided by members of the committee.

The April 16 meeting will consist of a "Clinique" demonstration.

New chairman set to fill Clark's shoes



Mary Clark flanked by treasurer Jill Yorke and officer secretary Marian Phipps

AT the AGM, outgoing chairman Mary Clark, was presented with a bouquet in recognition of her services to the guild.

Mary has been a very active member for many years and has served as chairman on three occasions over a total of seven years. With Mary in the picture are long-serving treasurer Jill Yorke and new officer secretary Marian Phipps.

It was a very successful AGM and a full committee of 10 members was raised.

SEDGLEY EVENING TWG

As there was no speaker, the evening was left free for a social chat, cup of tea and a cake. The club is now looking forward to this year's programme which will be unveiled at the next meeting. Meetings are on the third Monday in the month at Sedgley Community Centre at 7.15pm.

Speakers booked for year

GRANGE 'E' guild held its AGM at Grange Court, Prescott Road, Stourbridge on March 5.

Retiring secretary Gillian Wakefield read the minutes of the previous AGM. A new committee was elected and newly-appointed secretary Jean Williams presented

GRANGE 'E' TWG

gifts to members of the retiring committee and thanked them for all their hard work.

Jean reported that the guild had a full programme of speakers for the coming

year. The guild meets on the first Tuesday of every month, except January, and is presently recruiting for new members.

To join the guild or to come along as a guest, ring secretary Jean Williams on 01384 832439 for further information.

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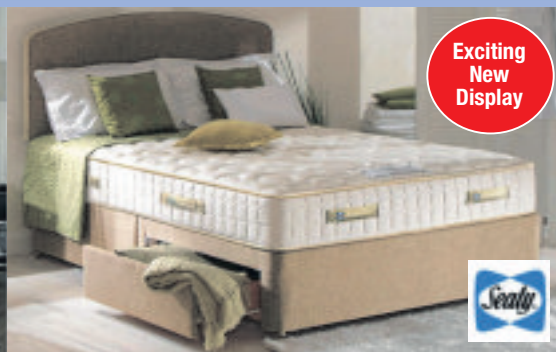
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COMPETITION

Tuning into this new audio range

MOBO award winner, Tinchy Stryder, joined forces with technology brand Goji last year, and produced a dynamic and exciting collection of headphones and travel speakers, perfect for listening to music on the go.

The Goji Tinchy Stryder: On Cloud 9 range is available exclusively at Currys & PC World and features in ear, on ear and over ear headphones and two travel speakers.

To celebrate the arrival of spring, we're giving one lucky reader the chance to win the whole Goji Tinchy Stryder: On Cloud 9 range including one of each style of the headphones and both travel speakers as well as £300 to spend in store at

your nearest Currys and PC World. The collaboration between Tinchy Stryder and Goji, now in its second year, includes in-ear headphones priced at £29.99, on-ear headphones at £49.99 and over-ear headphones for £69.99. Available in three colours, rich red, dark black and polar white, the headphones provide a crystal clear sound; a tangle free cable and all come with a handy carry pouch.

The white travel speakers have built-in Bluetooth connectivity, come with rechargeable batteries and include a stylish carry pouch, retailing at £24.99. The black speakers also include a hands-free phone connection for conference calling and 12-hour playback, retailing at £39.99.

The Goji Tinchy Stryder: On Cloud 9 audio range has been designed with the style-conscious music lover in mind, balancing affordability and premium sound quality across all devices.

Tinchy Stryder comments: "I've spent a lot of time working closely with the Goji team to make sure that the headphones and speakers all look and sound great and I can't wait to get their feedback on the range."

"I'm proud of what Goji and I have achieved over the last year and I'm especially glad that the charity I work closely with - vnpsired - will benefit from the sales of my on-ear and over-ear headphones too."

• For the further details on the stylish range of products check out www.currys.co.uk/goji and www.pcworld.co.uk/goji



Currys PC World

HOW TO ENTER

To be in with a chance of winning, simply answer this question:

How many colours does the Goji Tinchy Stryder: On Cloud 9 headphone range come in?

Send your answer on a postcard with your name, address and contact number to CURRYS Competition, Chronicle series (editorial), 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES. Closing date: Thursday, April 11, 2012. No cash alternative. Usual rules apply. Editor's decision is final. Entrants must be 18 or over.

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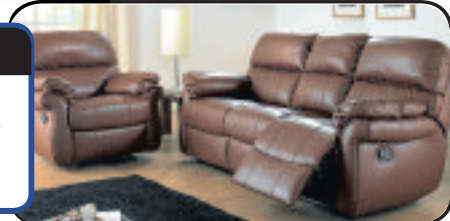
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NEWS

NEWS
in brief**Brewery on hunt for a new tenant**

HOLDEN'S Brewery needs someone to take over at the New Inn, Coseley, after the previous tenants decided to stand down after more than a decade.

But bosses at the brewery in Woodsetton, said they had so far been unable to find anyone to run the pub on a permanent basis.

They urged anyone who is interested in the business to get in touch with them at the earliest opportunity. For more details call Lucie Holden or her sister Abi Kemp on 01902 880051.

Event cancelled as stars pull out

A CHARITY event at Merry Hill shopping centre had to be cancelled at the last minute after two of its stars were forced to pull out.

Hundreds were expected to visit the Brierley Hill shopping centre to meet stars of TV, sport and music. But they were left disappointed when organisers were forced to pull the plug on the event after TOWIE stars Mario Falcone and Tom Kilbey were called up for filming work.

Tribute to Charlie

A NEW lion cub at West Midland Safari Park will be named after a Kidderminster youngster who died from a rare form of leukaemia. Charlie Harris Beard died aged two in February. Now the Bewdley safari park has announced it will name the male cub after him.

A mountain of molehills to bring a hole lot of trouble

MOLE hills seem to popping up here, there and everywhere.

And according to pest control experts in the region there is likely to be an invasion of the burrowing creatures this year.

Small piles of soil have suddenly emerged along grass verges by the side of roads, and gardens have also been blighted.

Stourbridge mole catcher Christian Hems said he had been inundated with calls about the problem in the past month. The 40-year-old said: "We are in the middle of the breeding season but there seems to be more moles than ever before."

"They come up to surface when they are looking for worms or a female mate."

"I think the moles have been breeding more often though because of all the rain we had last year. I expect a bumper amount of moles this year."

Mr Hems, from Wordsley, who started running pest control firm Pestforce about five years ago, labelled the A449 between Stafford and Wolverhampton as the "mole motorway".

Stretch

"It's a bad stretch along there for moles," he said. I don't do one-off jobs for people who live there because the moles always return straight away."

Staffordshire mole catcher Jason Sales, aged 42, from Leek, does jobs in Eccleshall near Stafford. He said his workload had been rapidly building.

"I've got so much work on," he said. "The moles are breeding at the moment but there seems to be a lot more activity this year. It's great for me, the more work the better."

He said moles favoured digging near the surface on farmland where the soil was looser.

He also said they were attracted to "idle ground" such as grass verges that run alongside roads. Mole hills on the surface are caused by excess soil pushed up to the surface from moles as they dig tunnels under the surface.



Mole catchers Aaron Turner, left, of Wednesbury and Christian Hems, of Wordsley are expecting a bumper year

Brian Alderton, who helped set up the national British Traditional Molecatchers Register, where qualified mole catchers can be found and contacted, said: "The problem will be worse this year because of the recession and the weather last summer."

Mole catchers weren't able to do their jobs because of the heavy rains. And people aren't paying for a mole catcher service when money is so tight."



Mole hills littering this verge at the side of the road is evidence of the animal's activity

Schemes will ease change to civvy life

DUDLEY Council has vowed to do more for members of the Armed Forces, in the wake of uncertainty in the services.

The borough council's new Armed Forces Champion, Councillor Dave Tyler, has spoken of new measures to help serving and ex-service personnel as they re-adjust to life in the borough.

He said: "They put their lives on the line for us. The least we can do is make things as easy as possible for them."

Among the ideas the council has put in place are that every day a member of the Armed Forces serves will now be counted as a day on the council housing list.

Councillor Tyler said: "They may not have been in council housing before, but suddenly are deployed back here or made redundant. We will make that process of moving between the Armed Forces wherever they are and into council housing here as seamless as we can."

Half-price access to a council leisure scheme would also be extended to serving forces personnel and reservists, he said.

He added: "Some of those young men and women need to be very fit for their roles. We want to make the financial burden of that as little as possible."

"We've got some other ideas but these are two we can do quite quickly and at little financial cost. In reality they can happen now but we're just waiting on paperwork."

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NEWS

Head of the pride



West Midland Safari Park's pride of lions enjoys the new Lion Rock, created as part of a new £750k exhibit

A NEW £750,000 exhibit has opened at West Midland Safari Park more than a year after work first started on the major project.

Realm of the Lions has been incorporated into the four-mile, self-drive safari at the attraction in Bewdley, which receives thousands of visitors every year.

It includes a giant sculpted lion's head rock feature from which a waterfall cascades into a pool below. As part of the project, some of the park has been landscaped to create the appearance of savannah grasslands, complete with boulders and plants.

The new project, which spans almost seven-and-a-half acres, will also serve as a new reserve for the park's pride of 13 African lions.

It has been designed in-house and was built under the supervision of the park's creative designer David Pownor. He said it had been a "massive project" for the attraction and was extremely proud of the result. "Design work started on it over a year ago. It was then modelled in clay to make sure the initial ideas worked and it looked the part," he said. "The model was then used by our builders to create the real thing. This in itself was quite a task since they were working from a table-top clay model."

Fraud pair attempted to cheat the Post Office

A HUSBAND and wife, who worked at a Dudley post office, tried to pocket £3,000 in fake compensation claims from Royal Mail.

Parvinder and Baljit Nijjar, from Willenhall, said packages containing £500 and a £2,450 diamond ring had not reached their intended destinations. But they had never been sent and the couple had falsely filled in forms to get compensation payouts.

by Adam Burling

Baljit Nijjar had access to documentation needed to lodge a compensation claim because she worked at the post office on Stourbridge High Street, Wolverhampton Magistrates Court heard.

Her husband had previously worked at the branch and both had run their own post office.

The court heard how one of the packages was to be delivered just 400 yards from their Willenhall home in Marshall Road. A mobile number registered to Baljit Nijjar was used on one form, claiming she was the intended receiver of the goods, while the other form stated she was the sender.

Prosecutor Mr John Dove said the claims, which were made within just three minutes of each other on June 13 last year, were an

"attempted scam". Baljit Nijjar filled gave the two packets to her sister-in-law, who she also worked with at the post office. Her sister-in-law processed them, believing they were genuine. But afterwards Baljit Nijjar removed the parcels from the post bag, and they were never sent, said Mr Dove.

The couple, both aged 36, pleaded guilty to two charges of fraud by false representation. Mr Dove said she owed her sister-in-law £7,000 and was working at the post office without wages to help pay the debt.

Both were given a six-week prison sentence, suspended for 12 months, with £1,155 costs each. They must also carry out 150 hours of unpaid work each. Mr Timothy Gascoyne, defending, said his clients had suffered financial difficulties and were now insolvent.

star★extraTRAVEL

ROBBIE WILLIAMS

Wednesday, June 19
Etihad Stadium, Manchester
Day excursion from **£99.⁹⁵**

After three spectacular sell-out shows at London's O2 Arena in November, Robbie Williams is to perform at Manchester's Etihad Stadium next June.

One of the world's most successful recording artists, with a record 17 Brit Awards, 10 UK number one albums and seven UK number one singles including Angels and Millennium, the Take That star is expected to perform tracks from his recent album Take the Crown, which went straight in at number one along with its lead single Candy, the fast-selling male artist single of 2012.

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Advertisement

Suction offers another solution



A CUTTING-EDGE development to help resolve the stability problems faced by thousands of denture wearers is now available. Denturist Steven Burchell Dip CDT RCS(Eng) says the invention has the potential to improve the life quality of those experiencing long-term problems with ill-fitting teeth. The Ultra Suction teeth are held in place by tiny valve-operated suction devices built into the dentures.

All on 4 is now here



One of the most advanced restorative options for denture wearers is available in Wolverhampton and Dudley. An implant system called All on 4 offers a permanently retained full arch of teeth in a day.

□ Call us for more details.

Finding a traditional answer

The work of the Denture Clinic has found satisfied customers from as far as Spain, the Isle of Skye, Anglesey and the south coast of England. Its hand-crafted dentures, made in laboratories on the premises, are known for their natural look, says clinic principal Steven Burchell Dip CDT RCS(Eng). "I remain passionate about resolving problems for denture wearers and for many, quality, traditional dentures can bring about hugely effective results. We always aim to exceed expectations and strive for best clinical outcomes."

Ann's transformation

ANN flashes an engaging smile and declares confidently: "I'm looking to join a choir – I love singing."

The retired general nurse, midwife and public health worker from the Midlands, continues: "It's one of the things I want to do again, having been involved in a Finding the Voice course."

"It's such a joyous pastime and what's more, it gives me pleasure while hopefully putting something back into life for others." It is hard to imagine Ann shying away from anything – a consummate, articulate professional, who embraces life and opportunity with an infectious enthusiasm.

But trouble with her teeth began to erode her positive approach and she admits her self-image took a dive. I became too self-conscious of my teeth."

She adds: "Family get-togethers over meals became awkward for me because my teeth were not functional, but it was at my mother's 90th birthday party it really came home to me."

"What's the matter with your teeth?"

"She said 'they're all misshapen'. It was true."

"My mother said what no-one else would say. It's true also, teeth can be life-damaging." Ann, who once worked in Australia before meeting her husband and returning to the UK, had suffered periodontal (gum) disease of her top crown.

Some teeth had become loose and twisted while other, more mobile teeth, had to be extracted. Her sister was a patient with Wolverhampton implantologist Jonathon Pugh BDS MSc, principal dentist at Parkdale Dental Clinic on Tettenall Road, and she persuaded her to have a consultation with him.

Mr Pugh recalls: "Sadly, by this time,

Ann's gum disease was aggressive and far too advanced so we didn't have the option to treat her gum disease.

We had to extract all of her upper teeth and then place four implants to support an implant-retained denture."

Ann's case was then referred to Steven Burchell Dip CDT RCS (Eng) of the Denture Clinic, which is now

taking appointments in Bearwood, and he prescribed and made the prosthetic. Mr Burchell, who also has a clinic in North Street, Dudley, says: "With the implant-retained top denture we could guarantee stabilisation, giving Ann the smile she wanted and excellent functionality too."

Ann, a volunteer support worker at a

hospice, adds: "I cannot speak highly enough of both clinics which provided excellent treatment for me."

"My implant-retained dentures have made a great improvement to my appearance and wellbeing."

"My teeth look and feel just like my own. It's been a good investment and offers a long-term solution."

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My teeth look and feel just like my own. I cannot speak highly enough of both clinics which provided excellent treatment for me



NEWS

NEWS
in brief**Beer festival is offering 40 ales**

FOUR pubs in Dudley borough are taking part in a 19-day beer festival.

The event will be taking place at the Full Moon, Dudley, the Clifton, Sedgley, and the Abraham Darby and Waterfront Inn, both in Brierley Hill.

It will run until April 21 and will feature new seasonal and speciality beers including a passion fruit beer, and coffee and chocolate beer.

Full Moon manager Nanette Young said: "The festival promises to be great fun, and I am certain people will enjoy themselves."

Walking event is all set to kick off

DUDLEY Walking Festival will be held from April 27 and May 5 and will conclude with the popular Borough Trail.

The event will begin with a charity bluebell walk around Cotwall End Valley on April 27.

Residents can enjoy a wildflower walk around Saltwells Nature Reserve on April 28 and can join the Leasowes trail, Halesowen. People can also take a gentle stroll around Himley Hall and Park at 10am on April 30.

Family's escape

A MOTHER and her two children had to evacuate their Cosely home after their dishwasher caught fire. Firefighters were called to the house in The Paddock at weekend to bring the blaze under control which was caused by a suspected electrical fault.

Region loses 4,400 firms to the recession, claims study

THE West Midlands lost 4,485 businesses during the recession, according to the latest figures.

In 2009 there were 191,550 active firms but by 2012 that had dropped to 187,065. Statistics also show that the Black Country alone lost 900 firms during the same period. The figures have been released by the Black Country Consortium, which is funded by the region's councils.

by Daniel Wainwright

It shows the region suffered a disproportionate drop during the worst of the financial crisis compared with other areas as the overall reduction in businesses in England was 5,330.

Yet despite the financial crisis the number of new businesses starting up has begun to increase.

There were 3,310 new businesses in 2011 compared with 3,055 the year before in the Black Country and 19,555 in the West Midlands as a whole in 2011, compared with 17,805 in 2010.

There is still a long way to go before the region gets back to growth levels seen in 2005, when 23,115 new businesses started up in the

West Midlands including 3,950 in the Black Country.

There are currently no new statistics to show how they are faring.

The latest figures show that in 2010, 13 per cent of new businesses failed within the first year compared with just over eight per cent the year before.

Despite the drop, Wolverhampton South East Labour MP Pat McFadden was optimistic for the region's businesses.

He said: "These figures seem to show a contrast with the national picture."

"They show reasonably low levels of business insolvency compared with an economic picture that is very weak," he added.



Sophie Harris, aged 13, is through to the regional finals of a talent competition

Sophie's talent hits right note

A 13-YEAR-OLD Dudley singer-songwriter is through to the regional finals of a talent competition.

Sophie Harris, of Cam Gardens, Pensnett, is one of only 25, out of more than 200 to get to the regional final of Britain Does Variety on May 18 at the Lighthouse Theatre, Kettering. She will perform a medley of well-known songs and pieces she has written.

The Kingswinford School pupil wowed judges in the last round by singing her own song called Goodbye Lullaby.

In the next round she will be joined by sister Daisy, seven, and two school friends who will be her backing dancers.

Sophie's mother, Vanessa, said: "She has tremendous support from everyone. Sophie loves performing. Alongside singing and writing, she is also a ballet dancer and has recently auditioned for a role in Grease at Brierley Hill Civic Hall."

Cameras to stay on until film runs out

SPEED cameras across the West Midlands will not face a blanket switch-off - and will instead keep catching motorists breaking the limit until they run out of film.

It was originally thought the last 73 of the region's 305 speed and traffic light cameras would be automatically turned off at the end of March as part of a drastic cost-cutting move.

But instead sources have revealed transport chiefs will keep them on until the film runs out. Bosses are looking at the long-term future of the sites with a review currently considering whether they could be converted to digital and turned back on in the future.

The move would offset the soaring costs of processing outdated wet film but transport bosses have put back a meeting to debate whether to go ahead with the upgrade until May.

In the meantime they are going to rely on mobile cameras in vans, doubling their fleet from two to four.

West Midlands Police said it would require a "major upgrade" to keep the remaining 73 cameras that are still in use going.

It is not known where the cameras that remain in operation are.

Each camera costs an average of £220 a year in maintenance. However, the cameras can catch more than 65,000 people a year which would generate thousands of pounds in fines.

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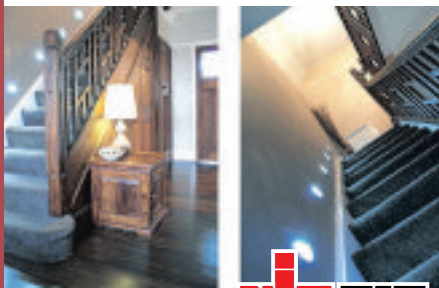
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New planning rules aim to boost town centres

OLD office blocks in the Black Country and South Staffordshire could be converted into flats without planning permission under new plans to relax rules and boost flagging town centres.

But Walsall, Sandwell and Dudley have insisted on being exempt from the Government changes.

Communities secretary Eric Pickles announced the new "permitted development" rights in January and Wolverhampton is the only borough in the Black Country not to have asked for an exemption. South Staffordshire Council has also not sought an exemption from the scheme.

The aim would be for offices to be turned into flats, encouraging more people to live in town centres and thus boosting trade in

struggling high street shops. Property experts believe developers will be disappointed by the lukewarm response.

Adrian Willet, a director in the development team at the Birmingham office of real estate company CBRE, said developers were keen to exploit the booming private rental market.

He said: "The proposed planning relaxation is significant in that it offers a fast-track solution to housing delivery.

"With no need to make additional financial contributions or include affordable housing, schemes which didn't previously stack up financially become viable."

The permitted development right will be in place for three years and councils had the opportunity to seek an exemption.

NHS deadline failure

THE West Midlands will not meet the deadline for rolling out the new NHS 111 number this week, as fears also grew about increased hospital admissions.

The region is one of 17 in the country which will not meet the April 1 deadline, with bosses citing "operational and technical issues".

However, it is feared patient numbers at accident and emergency departments could shoot up by eight per cent if people follow advice given on the 111 service.

When people call 111 they will be asked questions about symptoms by

a team of advisers supported by experienced nurses.

They will then either be given self-treatment advice or be directed to the most appropriate local service such as a GP out-of-hours service or a hospital's accident and emergency department. The number replaces NHS Direct and should in theory come into force on April 1.

Warned

Recently, the General Practitioners' Committee warned the 111 service was being hampered due to badly trained staff and long waiting times on the phone.

Wayne Bartlett, regional project director for NHS 111 in the West

Midlands, said systems and processes were being reviewed as soon as problems were occurring.

He added: "The NHS 111 service was launched in the West Midlands in a pre-testing phase for out-of-hours calls only. We have encountered some operational and technical issues which we have immediately responded to."

Meanwhile, at a hospital board meeting in Wolverhampton this week, it was predicted that attendances in its A&E department could rise by eight per cent after the new number is introduced.

The NHS Direct number - 0845 4647 - will still be available in areas where 111 is being phased in.

Fire risk in Beko goods

RESIDENTS who own a Beko fridge freezer should check they are not at risk from a product defect.

Some of the firm's frost-free fridge freezers made between January 2000 and October 2006 have been found to cause fires.

These have a serial number that begins with either 00, 01, 02, 03, 04, 05 or 06. The information can be found on a label inside the fridge. The company has asked that anyone with an affected model unplug it immediately and call free on 0800 917 2018. For more information visit <http://ref.safety.beko.co.uk>.

Bra-vo to gym for charity aid scheme



From left, Mayoress and Mayor of Dudley Michelle and Councillor Melvyn Mottram and gym manager Romina Redfern

BRAS of all shapes and sizes can be donated for a new charity campaign launched by a women's gym in Dudley.

Energie Fitness for Women gym has taken delivery of a bra bank to kickstart their latest effort to boost charity.

They are inviting women from the region to donate any unused bras to the gym in support of those suffering from breast cancer.

The Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Melvyn Mottram, and the Lady Mayoress Michelle Mottram, arrived to help launch the scheme and lend their support to the cause.

Bras will be collected ready to be recycled and sent to help cloth women in Africa.

A cash payment will also be made with every bag the gym, in Old Park Road, manages to collect ready to give to the Against Breast Cancer charity.

Gym owner Bal Dhillon said: "There are many positive sides to this such as the fact it helps those women in Africa and makes sure those garments are reused, and the charity benefits from the cash it receives from the business that comes to collect the bra bank."

"We are a ladies gym and this seemed like a really good cause for us to support. The girls are always coming up with fundraising ideas and we like to dream up ways to help charities whenever we can."

She said both members and non-members of the gym are welcome to drop off bras as part of the campaign.

For details or to arrange dropping off a donation visit www.ewff.co.uk/dudley or call 01902 678777.

Training programme gets the thumbs-up

THE University of Worcester's training of early years professionals has received the thumbs up from independent auditors.

In 2011, the university was awarded one of only eight national contracts to educate and train Early Years Professionals in England.

The University is the lead provider of the new Early Years Initial Teacher Training Programme for the West Midlands and South West regions, where it also works with partners.

The Quality Assurance Agency has now carried out its first audit of the programme since its introduction, resulting in a report which highlighted 11 strengths and two areas of good practice. Head of Early Childhood at the University, Dr Karen Hanson, said: "This is fantastic. We work very closely with our partners to provide excellent training for Early Years Professionals, who are already having a significant impact on the lives of many young children."

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Four days departing July 12 and 19

Pick of the week



PRICE FROM £219

THE north Devon landscape is a delightful mix of picturesque villages, remote moorland and spectacular coastline that borders the mighty Atlantic Ocean.

During this short break you will be able to enjoy the stunning scenery and visit some of the most beautiful areas including the privately owned village of Clovelly.

Entrance is included to Clovelly where, using traditional materials and craftsmanship, the village is kept in the style of the mid 19th century making you feel like you have stepped back in time.

There is so much to see and explore here, maybe pay a visit to the excellent pottery and silk workshops or just sit back and absorb Clovelly's unique atmosphere from the tiny, beautifully restored 13th century quay.

You will be taken on a full day excursion along the North Devon coast visiting Lynton and Lynmouth. These two villages are nestled in wooded river valleys and linked together by a 120 year old cliff railway. Each village boasts a wealth of quaint curio, pottery and souvenir shops, a local history museum, plus an abundance of cafes and hotels if you fancy treating yourself to a Devon clotted cream tea.

Visits are also made to Appledore where the narrow streets lead to a long tree lined quay and Barnstaple, capital of North Devon and one of the oldest towns in Britain.

INFO

- Return coach travel
- Three nights half-board accommodation
- Entrance to Clovelly
- Visits to Appledore, Lynton, Lynmouth and Barnstaple
- Optional excursion to RHS Rosemoor Garden
- Services of a tour driver
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

Coronation Festival at Buckingham Palace

Two days departing July 13



PRICE FROM £149.95

- Return coach travel
- Overnight half-board accommodation
- Admission to the Coronation Festival in Buckingham Palace Gardens (entry to Palace not included)
- Visit to Windsor
- Services of a coach driver/tour representative
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

A three-day rail break is also offered for this trip
Organised by Omega Holidays (ABTA V4782)

Chatsworth House and the Peak District

Two days departing July 28



PRICE FROM £89.95

- Return coach travel
- Overnight half-board accommodation
- Entrance to Chatsworth House and Gardens
- Tour of the Peak District
- Evening entertainment
- Services of a tour driver
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

Royal Ascot on Ladies Day

Day trip departing June 20



PRICE FROM £89.95

- Return coach travel
- Brunch-time full English breakfast with a glass of sparkling wine
- Admission to the Silver Ring enclosure (upgrade offered)
- Services of a coach driver/tour representative

Organised by Omega Holidays (ABTA V4782)

Chelsea Flower Show

Two days departing May 24



PRICE FROM £169.95

- Return coach travel
- Overnight half-board accommodation
- Admission to the Chelsea Flower Show
- Visit to Windsor
- Services of a coach driver/tour representative
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

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Settle Carlisle Railway and Pennine Waterways

Four days departing June 21, September 13



PRICE FROM £249

- Return coach travel
- Three nights half-board accommodation
- Journey on the Settle-Carlisle Railway
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The Isle of Wight and Osborne House

Three days departing May 10 and Sept 27



PRICE FROM £169

- Return coach travel and ferry crossings
- Two nights half-board accommodation
- Entrance to Osborne House and Queen Victoria's private beach
- Visits to Yarmouth, Alum Bay, Godshill, Newport and Ryde
- Optional excursion to Carisbrooke Castle
- Services of a tour driver
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

Two Thames Cruises

Two days departing
May 18, June 22, August 17, September 21



PRICE FROM £129.95

- Return coach travel
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- Two cruises on the River Thames
- Services of a coach driver/tour representative
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

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Three days departing most Fridays



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- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Please note the "from" price and price bands vary for each show
Organised by Omega Holidays (ABTA V4782)

Krakow

Four days various departure dates



PRICE FROM £389

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- Three nights bed and breakfast accommodation
- Guided sightseeing tour of Krakow
- Visit to the castle district
- Visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Riviera Travel (ABTA V4744, ATOL 3430)

Disneyland® Paris

Three days, various departure dates



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- Services of a representative

*Child prices from £119 (conditions apply)

Organised by Newmarket Holidays (ABTA V787X)

Lake Garda, Venice and Verona

Eight days various departure dates



PRICE FROM £599

- Return flights
- Seven nights half-board accommodation
- Tour of Lake Garda
- Guided tours of Verona and Venice
- Tour of the Dolomite mountains
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Riviera Travel (ABTA V4744, ATOL 3430)



What's On! Halesowen

Show set to serve up monthly laughs

DUDLEY'S monthly comedy event is being held at Stourbridge Town Hall on Thursday April 4.

The event showcases the best up and coming talent, giving audiences the chance to see cutting edge comedy at great prices.

The show is not suitable for those under 18 and curry and rice is served during interval with a vegetarian option available.

The show starts at 8pm and tickets are £8.

Spikey time from Dave at Town Hall

DAVE Spikey is coming to Dudley Town Hall in April as part of his "Words Don't Come Easy" tour.

His new show includes tongue-tied parents explaining the facts of life, ridiculous newspaper stories, poems, pathetic chat up lines, hospital speak, learning a foreign language and song lyrics described as "ranging from the lazy through surreal to the ridiculous".

The show is at 7.30pm on Saturday April 13.

Tickets are £18.50 or £16.50 concession.

Suggs tells of his life with Madness

MADNESS frontman Suggs has turned 50 and is bringing his life story to Dudley Town Hall.

Suggs My Life Story takes to the stage in a hilarious and moving show playing to rave reviews on April 19. Tickets cost £24.50.

Jasper beats the Brum with show of nostalgia

BRUMMIE funnyman Jasper Carrott has teamed up with one of his oldest friends for a new rock and pop show which is touring around Midlands venues in April and May.

Made in Brum will use music and comedy for a nostalgic look back at the people, places and songs which made the sixties Brumbeat scene such an influential one.

Jasper's lifelong pal Bev Bevan, formerly of Brummie rock icons The Move and ELO, has assembled an all-star band featuring ex-Move guitarist Trevor Burton, former guitarist of The Rockin' Berries Geoff Turton, Quill vocalist Joy Strachan-Brain and rock 'n' roll singer Danny King.

The show promises great music, anecdotes and of course a lot of laughs along the way.

Tickets are going fast, with all three nights at Lichfield Garrick Theatre already sold out and only a few seats remaining for the additional show on May 9.

Other confirmed dates include Dudley Town Hall, April 11, Birmingham Alexandra Theatre, April 25 and 26, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre (May 25) and Sutton Coldfield Town Hall (May 30).

Tickets are available from the venues or on the booking hotline 0121 323 2200.



Brummie Jasper Carrott



Gwen Taylor, as Daisy Werthan, and Don Warrington, as Hoke Coleburn, in Driving Miss Daisy, which is being staged at Wolverhampton Grand Photo: Nicholas Dawkes

Poignant drama is to drive in

HAVING enjoyed sell-out runs on Broadway and in the West End, David Esbjornson's award-winning production of Alfred Uhry's Driving Miss Daisy motors in to Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Tuesday to Saturday, April 9 to 1, as part of an extended tour.

The production stars Gwen Taylor, from Coronation Street, as Daisy Werthan, and Don Warrington, from Rising Damp and Death in Paradise, as her driver Hoke Coleburn. The cast also features Ian Porter as Boolie Werthan.

The play tells of the relationship between an elderly Jewish widow and her African American chauffeur in 1940s Atlanta. It was a hit film starring Jessica Tandy and Morgan Freeman.

Music show will be too darn hot

TOO Darn Hot - the West End's leading show band are bringing a new show celebrating the Sounds of the 70s and 80s.

The concert at Dudley Town Hall on April 16 will feature a selection of music including hits from ABBA, The Bee Gees, Bananarama, Barry White, Billy Joel, Donna Summer, The Jackson 5, Gloria Gaynor, Kylie Minogue, Madonna, Queen, Sister Sledge, Stevie Wonder, Tina Turner, Wham.

The band features top West End singers and musicians, who have all performed in numerous West End shows such as Mamma Mia and Saturday Night Fever.

The show starts at 2pm and tickets cost £11.00.

It's just cricket for raconteurs

FOLLOWING the huge success of Sticky Wicket and Rain Stops Play, the team of raconteurs from BBC's radio Test Match Special are on the road again with their new show - In The Box.

Ralph Dellor once again hosts the evening with Test Match Special commentators and cricketing legends as they recall their favourite anecdotes.

Ralph will be joined by Jeremy Cooney, Mike Gating and Geoff Miller.

The show is at Stourbridge Town Hall on April 16 starting at 7.30pm. Tickets are £18.

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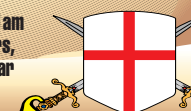
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What's On!

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Listings supplied by Press Association

CHOICE



Stephen Mulhern

Catchphrase

ITV, 6.45pm

'It's good, but it's not right,' remains one of the best-loved game show catchphrases of the past 20 years, largely because of host Roy Walker. Between 1986 and 1999, the Northern Irish comedian owned that jovial series, but while Nick Weir and Mark Curry later attempted to breathe new life into the format, by the end of December 2002, it seemed that was that. Now, after a long rest, it's Stephen Mulhern's turn asking contestants and audiences to "say what they see". As ever, players compete to guess the familiar phrases hidden in animated clues.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.55** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Flog It! **12.00** BBC News. Weather. **12.10** Points of View. **12.25** Countryfile. (R) **1.20** Bargain Hunt. **2.20** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **3.20** Walk on the Wild Side - Best in Show. **3.50** Fake Britain. (R) **4.20** Escape to the Country. (R) **5.20** Songs of Praise.

6.05 **Deadly 60 on a Mission.** Wild alligators, bobcats, salamanders and rattlesnakes in Florida.

6.35 **BBC News:** Regional News; Weather.

7.00 **Countryfile.** Matt Baker and Julia Bradbury are in Northamptonshire, visiting the Grand Union Canal and the county's hidden heritage sites. Tom Heap reports on Britain's booming deer population.

8.00 **Antiques Roadshow.** Fiona Bruce and the experts visit Cheltenham Town Hall, where items include a table with carved horse hooves for legs and espionage messages used in the Second World War.

9.00 **The Village.** John is drinking heavily as the Middleton farm falls on hard times, leading to a shocking revelation about his past mistakes. Caro's mental health takes a downturn.

10.00 **BBC News:** Regional News; Weather.

10.25 **Match of the Day 2.** Including action from Tottenham Hotspur v Everton.

11.45 **Football League Trophy Highlights.**

12.25 **The Sky at Night.** **12.45** **Film:** Evening. (2007) **2.35** **Weather.** **2.40** **BBC News.**

BBC2

6.00 This is BBC Two. **6.30** **Film:** Hell Drivers. (1957) **8.15** **Gardeners' World.** (R) **8.45** **The A to Z of TV Gardening.** **9.30** **The Beechgrove Garden.** **10.00** **Saturday Kitchen Best Bites.** **11.30** **Paul Hollywood's Bread.** (R) **12.00** **EastEnders.** (R) **1.55** **Triathlon.** **3.30** **The Great Rift: Africa's Wild Heart.** (R) **4.30** **Secrets of Our Living Planet.** (R) **5.30** **Coast.** (R)

6.30 **Donald Campbell: Speed King.** Profile of the man who set eight world speed records on water and land in the 1950s and 60s, using archive footage and first-hand testimonies of those who knew him. (R)

7.30 **Live MotoGP.** Matt Roberts presents coverage of the Qatar Grand Prix at the Losail International Circuit in Doha (Start-time 8.00pm), where the opening race of the season takes place.

9.00 **Toughest Place to Be a Fisherman - The Return.** Andy Giles revisits the Sierra Leone village he worked in 18 months ago.

10.00 **Mock the Week Looks Back at Science and Technology.** Another themed selection from the show's archives.

10.30 **It's Kevin.** Comedian Kevin Eldon takes a trip backstage with trusty studio caretaker Bob.

11.00 **Film: Dead Poets Society.** (1989) A teacher at a staid New England school in the 1950s raises eyebrows by encouraging his pupils to live life beyond their expectations. Drama, with Robin Williams and Ethan Hawke.

1.00 **The Sky at Night: A Very British Wedding.** (R) **2.00** **Holly City.** (R) **3.00** **This is BBC Two.**

ITV

6.00 **CITV:** Jungle Junction. **6.15** **Jungle Junction.** **6.25** **The Hive.** (R) **6.35** **The Hive.** (R) **6.45** **Dino Dan.** (R) **7.00** **Dino Dan.** (R) **7.10** **Animals.** (R) **7.20** **Animals.** (R) **7.25** **Bookaboo.** **7.40** **Matt Hatter Chronicles.** (R) **8.05** **Kick Buttowski - Suburban Daredevil.** **8.15** **Kick Buttowski - Suburban Daredevil.** **8.30** **Almost Naked Animals.** (R) **8.45** **Almost Naked Animals.** (R) **9.00** **The Aquabats Super Show.** (R) **9.25** **ITV News.** **9.30** **The Jeremy Kyle Show USA.** (R) **10.25** **Dickinson's Real Deal.** (R) **11.25** **ITV News: Weather.** **11.35** **Film:** Columbo: Swan Song. (1974) **1.35** **I Love You've Been Framed!** (R)

2.35 **Doc Martin.** (R) **3.35** **Food Glorious Food.** (R) **4.35** **Film:** The Scorpion King. (2002) Fantasy, starring Dwayne Johnson.

6.15 **Regional Programme;** Weather.

6.30 **ITV News:** Weather.

6.45 **Catchphrase.**

7.30 **Off Their Rockers.** New series. Senior citizens play pranks on the public.

8.00 **Foyle's War.** The detective is drawn into the strange murder of a former high-ranking Nazi who had been hired by MI5 due to his expert knowledge of Soviet intelligence. Last in the series.

10.00 **Perspectives: Portillo on Picasso.** Michael Portillo explores the life and work of Pablo Picasso.

11.00 **ITV News:** Weather.

11.15 **Who Killed My Dad? - The Death of Terry Lloyd.** The war reporter's daughter returns to the scene of his death in Iraq. (R)

12.25 **The Store.** **2.30** **Monk.** (R) **3.10** **ITV News.** **5.05** **The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.00 **The Treacle People.** (R) **6.10** **The Hoobs.** (R) **6.35** **FIA GT1.** **7.30** **Triathlon.** **8.00** **Everybody Loves Raymond.** (R) **8.30** **Fraser.** (R) **9.00** **Fraser.** (R) **9.30** **Sunday Brunch.** **12.00** **The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **12.25** **The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **12.55** **The Simpsons.** (R) **1.25** **The Simpsons.** (R) **1.55** **Film:** A Knight's Tale. (2001)

6.30 **Channel 4 News.**

7.00 **Nick Hewer: Countdown to Freetown.** The Countdown host embarks on a mission to tow an industrial saw and generator 5,000 miles to the capital of Sierra Leone, where he will present his gift to a young carpenter.

8.00 **The Secret Millions.** Dave Fishwick opens a job centre to find work for young people from challenging backgrounds, aiming to introduce employers to candidates they would not normally consider hiring.

9.00 **Film: The King's Speech.** (2010) Premiere. The son of George VI seeks the help of an eccentric Australian speech therapist as he rises suddenly to the throne. Fact-based drama, with Colin Firth and Geoffrey Rush.

11.20 **Film: Nine to Five.** (1980) Three female office employees grow weary of their chauvinistic boss and set out to teach him a lesson. Comedy, starring Dolly Parton, Jane Fonda, Lily Tomlin and Dabney Coleman.

1.20 **Film: Sherrybaby.** (2006) Comedy, starring Dolly Parton, Jane Fonda, Lily Tomlin and Dabney Coleman.

3.00 **Southland.** (R) **3.40** **St Elsewhere.** (R) **4.30** **Come Dine with Me.** (R) **5.25** **Deal or No Deal.** (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 **Milkshake!** Peppa Pig. **6.05** **Roary the Racing Car.** (R) **6.15** **Fifi and the Flowertots.** (R) **6.25** **Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures.** (R) **6.30** **The Mr Men Show.** (R) **6.45** **Olive the Ostrich.** (R) **6.50** **Abby's Flying Fairy School.** (R) **7.00** **Roobarb and Custard Too.** (R) **7.05** **Bananas in Pyjamas.** (R) **7.20** **Animal Antics.** (R) **7.25** **Noddy in Toyland.** (R) **7.40** **City of Friends.** (R) **7.50** **Little Princess.** (R) **8.05** **The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky.** (R) **8.20** **Angelina Ballerina.** (R) **8.30** **Mio Mao.** (R) **8.40** **Castle Farm.** (R)

8.45 **Rupert Bear.** (R) **9.00** **Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom.** (R) **9.15** **Toby's Travelling Circus.** (R) **9.30** **Roary the Racing Car.** (R) **9.45** **Jelly Jam.** (R) **10.00** **Power Rangers Samurai.** (R) **10.35** **Batman: The Brave and the Bold.** (R) **11.00** **Cowboy Builders.** (R) **12.00** **Film: Pooh's Grand Adventure: The Search for Christopher Robin.** (1997) **1.30** **Film: Adventures in Babysitting.** (1987) **3.20** **Film: Tinker Bell and the Lost Treasure.** (2008) **4.55** **5 News Weekend.** **5.00** **Film: Practical Magic.** (1998)

6.50 **Film: Miss Congeniality 2: Armed and Fabulous.** (2005) Comedy sequel, starring Sandra Bullock.

9.00 **Once Upon a Time.** New series. The fantasy drama returns. The people of Storybrooke remember their past lives.

10.00 **Person of Interest.** (2010) Premiere. The son of George VI seeks the help of an eccentric Australian speech therapist as he rises suddenly to the throne. Fact-based drama, with Colin Firth and Geoffrey Rush.

10.55 **Film: Bulletproof.** (1996) Action comedy, starring Adam Sandler.

12.35 **Campfire PD.** **1.05** **SuperCasino.** **4.00** **Nick's Quest.** (R) **4.50** **County Secrets.** (R) **5.05** **Hana's Helpline.** (R) **5.15** **Roary the Racing Car.** (R) **5.25** **Hana's Helpline.** (R) **5.35** **Roary the Racing Car.** (R) **5.50** **Hana's Helpline.** (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 **The Voice UK** **8.35** **Film:** How to Train Your Dragon (2010) **10.00** **Barely Legal Drivers** **11.00** **Family Guy** **11.50** **American Dad!**

BBC Four
7.00 **Vatican - The Hidden World.** **8.00** **Mark Lawson Talks to Michael Ball** **9.00** **Motor Racing at the BBC:** That Petrol Emotion **9.30** **Caravans:** A British Love Affair **10.30** **From the Sea to the Land Beyond:** Britain's Coast on Film **11.45** **Les Mis at 25:** Matt Lucas Dreams the Dream

BBC One
3.50 **Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway** **5.10** **You've Been Framed!** **6.10** **Film:** Babe (1995) **8.00** **You've Been Framed!** **10.00** **Film:** The Holiday (2006) **11.40** **Celebrity Juice**

ITV2
3.50 **Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway** **5.10** **You've Been Framed!** **6.10** **Film:** Babe (1995) **8.00** **You've Been Framed!** **10.00** **Film:** The Holiday (2006) **11.40** **Celebrity Juice**

ITV3
2.50 **Film:** The Pure Hell of St. Trinian's (1960) **4.40** **Wycliffe** **5.50** **Agatha Christie's Poirot** **7.55** **An Audience with Diana Ross** **9.00** **Film:** Bird on a Wire (1990) **11.15** **Agatha Christie's Mapple**

ITV4
11.00 **Live Indian Premier League Cricket.** **8.00** **Brian Lara: Sports Life Stories** **9.00** **Cycling: Paris-Roubaix Highlights** **10.00** **Film:** American Gangster (2007)

E4
5.00 **Revenge** **6.00** **The Big Bang Theory** **7.00** **New Girl** **7.30** **The Mindy Project** **8.00** **Film:** Big Momma's House (2000) **10.00** **Rude Tube** **11.00** **The Body Shocking Show** **11.30** **The Big Bang Theory**

Film4
3.00 **The Cat Returns** (2002) **4.35** **The Golden Compass** (2007) **6.45** **The Jewel of the Nile** (1985) **8.00** **Comedy adventure sequel, starring Michael Douglas.** **9.00** **Unknow (2011)** **11.15** **Memento** (2000)

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What's On!

Film Choices

MONDAY

Lone Rider, Channel 5, 3.20pm

A veteran of the American Civil War returns to his home town to discover a former friend, who has become a ruthless land baron, is intent on seizing his father's ranch, forcing the hardened soldier to take up arms once more to protect his family and property. Western, starring Lou Diamond Phillips. (2008)

Young Guns, Channel 5, 11pm

Petty crook Billy the Kid is taken in by English farmer John Tunstall and given a job as a ranch hand. However, when Tunstall is murdered by a business rival, Billy and the rest of his 'regulators' set out to avenge his death, leading them into conflict with the law – and marking the start of Billy's notoriety as a gunslinger. Western, with Emilio Estevez. (1988)

TUESDAY

The Ladykillers, BBC1, 11.35pm

A criminal mastermind posing as a professor rents a room in the Deep South from an elderly woman in a bid to tunnel through her basement to a nearby casino. However, the unsuspecting landlady unintentionally gets in the way of his plans. Tom Hanks stars. (2004)



Young Guns, Monday, Channel 5, 11pm

WEDNESDAY

Ladder 49, BBC1, 11.05pm

A fireman becomes trapped in a burning building and, aware his chances of survival are slim, reflects on the events that led him to his chosen career. He recalls his rise from the station's laughing stock to a respected member of the team, and the effect his dangerous profession has had on his family. Meanwhile, his mentor is battling to get him out of the building alive. Drama, with Joaquin Phoenix and John Travolta. (2004)

THURSDAY

One Mile Away, Channel 4, 11.10pm

Penny Woolcock's documentary charts the efforts of warring gangs the Burger Bar Boys and the Johnson Crew to bring peace to their neighbourhoods in inner-city Birmingham. (2012)

FRIDAY

Paycheck, BBC1, 11.55pm

An engineer carries out a top-secret job on the understanding that his knowledge of the task will be erased from his mind afterwards to protect his employer's intellectual property. However, waking after the memory-wiping procedure, he is shocked to learn he had somehow agreed to waive the huge payment due to him – and is wanted for a murder he does not remember committing. John Woo's thriller, starring Ben Affleck, Uma Thurman and Aaron Eckhart. (2003)

Pick of the Week

Boxing match sets the alarm bells ringing

There's nothing like a good, old-fashioned reunion, is there? At first glance, The Security Men doesn't seem to be a comedy, but if you look a little deeper, there are a couple...

Initially, you may think that the pairing of Caroline Aherne and Bobby Ball is a strange one. Okay, so they're both well-known for their collaborations with others – Ball with his long-standing comedy partner Tommy Cannon and Aherne most notably with Craig Cash, with whom she created The Royle Family – but their comedy styles have little in common.

But they're together for this new offering, and not for the first time either – their first collaboration came with The Fastest Man in Britain, which aired in 2009.

That one-off comedy drama also featured Brendan O'Carroll, who appears here too, and was co-written by Aherne and Joe Pope; they've created this series, for which ITV's head honchos have very high hopes indeed. ITV's director of entertainment and comedy Elaine Bedell says of it: "We're absolutely

delighted to be working with Caroline and Jeff, two writers at the top of their game.

"I'm a huge fan of both and believe together they have created some of the best comedy scripts for television.

"Combined with the talent and wit of our cast, The Security Men is a very fresh and exciting project for ITV."

Sadly Aherne won't be acting in the series, but Ball and O'Carroll will be joined on screen by Paddy McGuinness, Peter Wight and Dean Andrews.

The plot of each episode focuses on the working lives of security guards working the night shift at a fictional Manchester shopping centre called The Whittington.

The guards are supposed to spend their time making sure the place is safe and burglar-free; in reality, they're a bunch of work-shy individuals who would prefer to avoid working at all – in fact, they expend far more energy avoiding the watchful eye of their boss than they do carrying out their duties.

The first episode sees them desperate to watch a televised boxing match, and think they've worked out a way to make it possible – if they switch off the alarms they can enter an electrical store and simply watch the bout on one of its big-screen, surround-sound, state-of-the-art TVs.

What can possibly go wrong? Well, as you may have guessed, an awful lot in a very short space of time...

If The Security Men takes off, will this mean the end of The Royle Family? Aherne hasn't made a decision on that, but seeing as the last few Christmas specials featuring the layabout clan have been rather disappointing, few would be sad to say farewell to them – and perhaps the writer/director/actress could use a fresh start with new characters.

This is her first new comedy series for more than a decade, since the short-lived Dossa and Joe in 2002, and she could probably use a hit. Let's hope The Security Guards is it – and is worth waiting for.



Bobby Ball and Brendan O'Carroll star in The Security Men, Friday, ITV, 9pm

Best of the Rest

MONDAY

Broadchurch, ITV, 9pm

ITV isn't giving much away about this drama, and thank goodness for that. You may think you want to know exactly what's going on, but take a second to think about that – do you really want to know every single intricate twist and turn? Do you really want to know who killed Danny Latimer before anybody else? Okay, so it might be fine and dandy to have the kudos of being 'in the know', but that would soon wear off, and you'd be left wondering why you'd spoilt the suspense for yourself. So... what can we tell you about this week's plot? Well, the locals are about to gather together to mourn Danny's passing. But while doing that, a new suspect in his murder comes to light.

The Prisoners, BBC1, 9pm

This new, three-part documentary series focuses on convicts stuck in a vicious circle – some of them, it seems, are no sooner let out onto the streets before reoffending and ending up back inside. The opening edition takes a look at the lives of inmates at Holloway Prison in London, which in the past has housed such infamous figures as Ruth Ellis, Myra Hindley, Diana Mosley and Maxine Carr. The women featured here aren't as notorious, but their lives are extraordinary in a way. Jayde is only 18 but this is her sixth spell in jail, while 23-year-old Crystal claims she feels at home at Holloway, having been a regular there for the past six years.

TUESDAY

UEFA Champions League Live, ITV, 7.30pm

Galatasaray host European giants Real Madrid in this quarter-final second-leg clash at the Turk Telekom Arena in Istanbul. With last week's reverse fixture at the Bernabeu fresh in their memories, both clubs will be looking to do enough here to book a place in the competition's semi-finals, and take the next step toward its conclusion at Wembley Stadium next month. Whatever the outcome of the first leg, the Turkish outfit will have to improve upon their home form in this season's competition, having won just once in front of their own fans, that being a 1-0 victory in the group stage against a depleted Manchester United side.

WEDNESDAY

Victoria Wood's Nice Cup of Tea, BBC1, 9pm

Apparently, this two-part documentary had the working title The Great British Cuppa, which made it sound like a televised contest to be judged by Mary Berry, with marks deducted for letting the leaves stew too long. Instead though, it's a two-part documentary which sees one national institution, Victoria Wood, celebrating the history of another, the cup of tea. But it seems the humble brew

hasn't always had such a cosy image. In the past, tea has helped to trigger wars – and aided Britain in winning them. Victoria's quest to find out how this small, exotic plant came to pay such a big part in British life takes her from the back streets of Kolkata to the mega city of Shanghai.

THURSDAY

James May's Man Lab, BBC2, 8pm

In Poole, 1973, James May Snr, lost his wedding ring on the beach at Sandbanks. Thankfully, his quick-thinking wife returned with a deep fat fryer basket so they could sieve the sand and find the ring. Alas, they failed. So, with the aid of geomorphologist Vincent May (no relation), James May Jnr pulls out all the stops in the hope of finding his dad's beloved ring four decades on. He also develops a gadget (aka model train) which can filter junk mail, and recaptures the spirit of pirate radio, with the aid of a canal barge, a 3G box of tricks, six sim cards and plenty of other hi-tech gubbins.

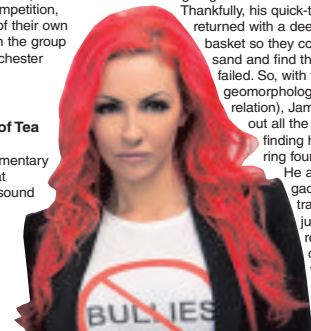
Jodie Marsh: Bullied, Channel 5, 10pm

Last week we saw glamour model-turned-bodybuilder Jodie Marsh jet off to the USA on a fact-finding mission; she wanted to know how the American education system was dealing with bullying. What she discovered was rather enlightening, and now she wants to introduce some of its methods to the UK, where almost half of children claim they have suffered from some form of bullying. Jodie visits Carlton Community College in Barnsley, a school with a troubled past whose new headmaster, Neil Hutchinson, wants to turn its fortunes around – can Jodie and her anti-bullying campaigner friend Alex give him the help he needs?

FRIDAY

Isaac Newton: The Last Magician, BBC2, 9pm

At first glance, the title of this one-off documentary may seem a bit unlikely. After all, Isaac Newton is considered to be a genius, a great rationalist who laid the foundation for many scientific and mathematical breakthroughs. So, surely he didn't have a sideline in pulling rabbits out of hats? Well, no, but it turns out he did have an interest in the alchemy, heretical religion and the occult. His more controversial obsessions were glossed over in the wake of his death to protect his reputation, but when economist John Maynard Keynes bought Newton's papers in 1936, the truth began to emerge – and this documentary offers further insights into a complicated man.



Jodie Marsh: Bullied, Thursday, Channel 5, 10pm

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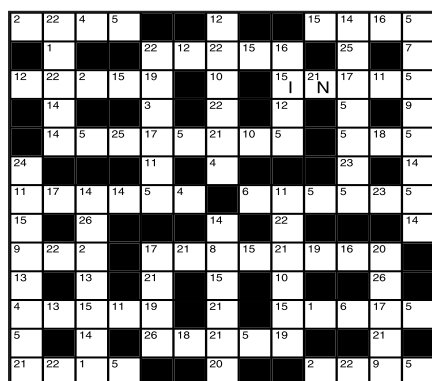
What's On!

Brain Gym

No.215

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

W	F	K	I	Z	T	Q	V	C	L	N	E	R
B	X	M	H	U	Y	A	S	O	P	D	G	J

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

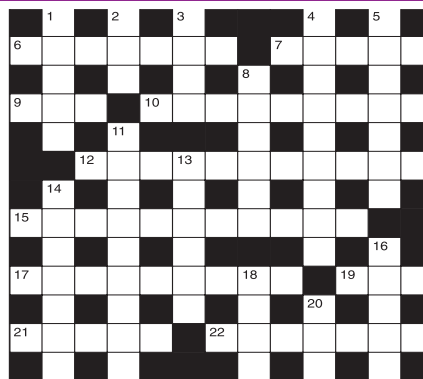
Cryptic Clues:

Across

6. Produce an eviction order? (4,3)
 7. Penny loaf? How funny! (5)
 9. How a motorist can correct a glaring error (3)
 10. She gets the theatre in an uproar (9)
 12. It describes Adam or I (5,6)
 15. Decline to acknowledge applause - and retire! (4,4,3)
 17. Rose spray? (9)
 19. The last thing one aims for (3)
 21. Feeling irritable? (5)
 22. Feeling fed-up? (7)

Down

1. His victims lose heart (5)
 2. Person who discredits an old woman (3)
 3. One type has four heels, another none at all (4)
 4. It's for the rest of the cast (5,4)
 5. His fare is too much (7)
 8. Fit a support with hesitation (6)
 11. I'll get him prepared for publicity's glare (9)
 13. Capital form of punishment (6)
 14. They're trodden underfoot (7)
 16. One I form out of uniformity (5)
 18. It's flat and square (4)
 20. He gets red if a stranger addresses him! (3)
 22. Shake (7)



Quick Clues:

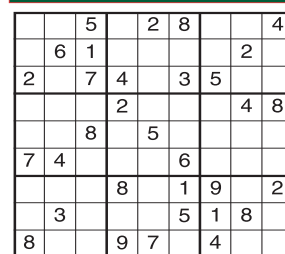
Across

6. Advance (7)
 7. Body of troops (5)
 9. Employ (3)
 10. Cancellation (9)
 12. Theory (11)
 15. Introductory (11)
 17. Perilous (9)
 19. Fresh (3)
 21. Set free (5)
 22. Shake (7)

Down

1. Attire (5)
 2. Perform (3)
 3. Average (4)
 4. Sleeping room (9)
 5. Belief (7)
 8. Morose (6)
 11. Express regret (9)
 13. Photographic device (6)
 14. Maker (7)
 16. Trifling (5)
 18. Incite (4)
 20. Pig-pen (3)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

1	3	5	9	8	2	7	4	6
8	7	2	9	4	6	1	9	3
4	9	6	7	1	3	8	5	2
9	4	7	1	3	5	6	2	8
3	5	8	6	2	7	4	1	9
6	2	1	8	9	4	3	7	5
7	1	3	2	6	9	5	8	4
5	6	9	4	7	8	2	3	1
2	8	4	3	5	1	9	6	7

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
 CRYPTIC - Across: 7 Get one's hand in; 8 Admirers; 9 Well; 10 Absent; 12 Stress; 14 Seance; 16 Titian; 18 Peru; 20 Absconds; 22 Archaeologist. Down: 1 Readable; 2 Iodine; 3 Code; 4 Chess set; 5 Answer; 6 Tilt; 11 Teenager; 13 Slap-dash; 15 Nought; 17 Trough; 19 Earl; 21 Sole. QUICK - Across: 7 Overstatement; 8 Pretence; 9 Ease; 10 Siesta; 12 Greedy; 14 Infant; 16 Humble; 18 Plot; 20 Navigate; 22 Contemplation. Down: 1 Aversion; 2 Gratis; 3 Stun; 4 Strength; 5 Impede; 6 Onus; 11 Autonomy; 13 Dilatation; 15 Aslute; 17 Mighty; 19 Loot; 21 Vile.

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Saturday Night from £129.⁹⁵

Dine and Dance from £139.⁹⁵

Take in a top West End show and have some free time in London for shopping and sightseeing. For the Dine and Dance option see the matinee performance before heading back to the hotel for dinner and disco (conditions apply). For the Saturday Night option you will see the evening performance. For both breaks the price includes a theatre ticket, overnight stay in a four-star outer London hotel, with full English breakfast (plus dinner for Dine and Dance options). Pick ups offered are Dudley, Shrewsbury, Telford, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

Rail inclusive breaks - Two or three days

Departures most weekends

Saturday Night Theatre from £139.⁹⁵

Catch the Theatre Express and enjoy a super two-day weekend break in the capital. There's a choice of London hotels and your ticket is for a Saturday evening performance. Rail travel is standard class with the option to upgrade. Departs Saturday morning/early afternoon from Birmingham New Street, Shrewsbury, Stafford or Wolverhampton, returning on the Sunday afternoon/early evening to give plenty of free time for shopping and sightseeing.

Theatre Showstopper from £189.⁹⁵

Theatre Weekend from £189.⁹⁵

These popular theatre packages to the West End depart from Birmingham New Street, Shrewsbury, Stafford or Wolverhampton on the Friday morning returning on the Sunday afternoon/early evening. Standard class travel is included with the option to upgrade. Two nights stay at a three or four-star London hotel of your choice (hotel supplements may apply) and a top priced ticket for a Friday evening performance for the Theatre Showstopper package or choose your price band for the Saturday evening performance with the Theatre Weekend package.

*The "from" price and price bands vary for each show - see brochure for details. Single room supplements apply.

Arranged by Omega Holidays (ABTA V4782)

For a theatre brochure please call (01902) 319999 (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm),
 or go to expressandstar.com/starextratavel

Please read brochure/web page for full information plus terms and conditions

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HALESOWEN, NEWLANDS DRIVE

Sought after location. Ideally located for Hest Green Primary School and Halesbury School. Blackthorn and buses to Halesowen and Birmingham. This 2 double bedroom and 1 single bedroom semi-detached house comprises a spacious lounge with feature fireplace, modern fitted kitchen/dining room, house bathroom with shower, downstairs WC, gas central heating, large driveway and large rear garden. EPC: E

£695 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, NEWLAND GARDENS

Spacious well situated link-detached bungalow in cul de sac position. Large lounge, fitted kitchen opening into superbly proportioned full with conservatory overlooking private rear garden. 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with shower, garage & driveway, gas central heating/double glazed. Available immediately. Unfurnished or furnished to suit. EPC: D

£650 PCM



HALESOWEN, WHITTINGHAM ROAD

The best position for Newfield Primary School and Halesowen College. This large 3 bedroom semi-detached house features fitted kitchen with double oven and gas hob, utility room/storage area, huge lounge with patio doors to a nice sized rear garden, modern bathroom with 'y' shaped bath and shower, driveway parking and garage. EPC: F

£650 PCM



DUDLEY, STOURBRIDGE ROAD

Totally refurbished to a good standard with period features. A terraced 3 bedroom property close to Dudley town centre featuring a lovely entrance hall with mirror flooring, charming lounge and separate dining room with feature fireplace, large new kitchen with overhead, downstairs wc, family bathroom with shower and a wonderful rear garden. Viewing recommended to appreciate this property. Available immediately. EPC: F

£625 PCM



HALESOWEN, HOWLEY GRANGE ROAD

A unfurnished semi detached house, in a well sought after location, briefly comprising of: Gas Central Heating, 2 Living Rooms, Fitted Kitchen, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Small Rear Garden, Driveway Parking. EPC: E

£625 PCM



HALESOWEN, SANDERSON PLACE

Luxury living in Hayley Green. This superb luxury 1st floor apartment offers spacious accommodation including open plan lounge/kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, master with en-suite, a further well appointed bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing and allocated parking. EPC: B

£625 PCM



OLDBURY, ST MATTHEWS ROAD

Refurbished to a high standard. This 3 bedroom mid-terrace property in Oldbury/Quinton area has lounge, fitted kitchen, blow air central heating, white bathroom suite with shower, separate wc, rear garden with parking. Available immediately. EPC: D

£600 PCM



MERRY HILL, MADISON AVENUE

Flexible accommodation with 3 bedrooms. A spacious unfurnished modern townhouse, within walking distance of Merry Hill shopping centre, featuring kitchen, downstairs WC, dining room/study/lounge, bathroom, master en-suite shower room, allocated parking space. EPC: C

£595 PCM



TIPTON, PEARTREE AVENUE

Cul-de-sac location. This deceptively large 3 bedroom terraced house is undergoing a redecoration. It features a spacious lounge, large modern fitted kitchen, house bathroom with shower, nice sized garden, driveway parking and in a quiet cul-de-sac location. EPC: C

£550 PCM



ROWLEY REGIS, POWKE LANE

Great value close to Blackheath town centre. A large and spacious mid-terrace unfurnished house featuring 2 reception rooms, dining room, modern fitted kitchen with cooker, downstairs bathroom with wc, 3 bedrooms (2 with fitted wardrobes), upstairs wc, gas central heating, double glazing, on road parking. A great price. EPC: D

£525 PCM



HALESOWEN, ADAMS COURT

Conveniently located for local shops and buses to Halesowen and Stourbridge. A large and spacious ground floor apartment features modern decor and fixtures and benefits from gas central heating, spacious living room, fitted kitchen with white goods, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with separate shower cubicle, allocated parking space. EPC: C

£525 PCM



HALESOWEN, TENTERFIELDS

An exceptional opportunity to rent a double room in a shared house, with no bills to pay at all, cleaning done for you, towels and tea and coffee supplied for each room. Also the use of free WiFi, use of the lounge, kitchen, office, room. All rooms have their own en-suite facilities. Well worth a viewing, and ideal for a single person.

£500 PCM



QUARRY BANK, EVERS STREET

Complete refurbishment. Set in a quiet residential area, within minutes of Merry Hill, local shops, buses to Merry Hill and Cradley Heath. This mid terraced house features 2 double bedrooms, 1 reception room, large kitchen, house bathroom with shower, nice sized rear garden, on road parking. EPC: D

£500 PCM



HALESOWEN, HAGLEY STREET

Fantastic refurbishment over 2 floors. A fully refurbished modern duplex apartment above an electrical shop in the very centre of Halesowen. Featuring a large open plan living area with modern fitted kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with shower. Additional £40 fixed electric charge is applicable. EPC: C

£499 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, LUANNE CLOSE

Immaculately presented first floor apartment. Located on a popular development, ideally situated for old hill train station and local shops this 2 bedroom apartment features, light and airy lounge, with access to private balcony, fitted kitchen with washer/dryer, gas central heating, bathroom with shower, allocated parking, communal garden. Available now. EPC: B

£495 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, COPPICE ROAD

A 2 bedroom semi-detached house recently fully refurbished comprising front reception room, spacious rear lounge, fitted kitchen, house bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing, front and rear gardens, on road parking. EPC: C

£495 PCM



DUDLEY, ANCHOR DRIVE

Modern and comfortable living. This 2nd floor apartment is set in a quiet location, with easy access to Dudley, Tipton, Wednesbury and the M5. The property features 2 double bedrooms, modern fitted kitchen with integrated electric oven and hob, while bathroom suite with shower, spacious lounge with patio doors opening to a Juliet balcony, electric heating, double glazing, allocated parking space. EPC: C

£475 PCM



HALESOWEN, STOUR COURT

Located in a quiet, desirable neighbourhood is this well kept 1st floor apartment situated in a peaceful cul de sac, offering a spacious living room, modern fitted kitchen with built in cooker and hob, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with fitted shower, allocated parking space. EPC: C

£475 PCM



ROWLEY REGIS, POWKE LANE

Ideal for local amenities. A first floor flat, close to shops and local train station featuring electric storage heating, fitted kitchen, living room, 1 double bedroom, bathroom with shower, ample parking. EPC: E

£425 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, ELBOW STREET

Set in the heart of Old Hill. A modern and spacious 2nd floor apartment, ideally situated for Old Hill train station and shopping in Cradley Heath. This apartment offers 1 double bedroom, fitted kitchen with washer/dryer, modern bathroom with shower, large lounge with patio doors opening to a Juliet balcony, electric heating, double glazing, allocated parking space. An opportunity not to be missed! EPC: B

£425 PCM



HALESOWEN, APPERLEY WAY

Available is this unfurnished 1st floor apartment which is well presented throughout, within walking distance to Cradley Heath train station, featuring a modern fitted kitchen, light and airy lounge, bathroom with shower, 1 bedroom with built in wardrobes, communal drying area. EPC: E

£395 PCM

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Your top property guide for Dudley, Halesowen, Sedgley, Kidderminster and Stourbridge



A stunning and contemporary kitchen is included



The bathroom – the property is well-presented throughout

Semi-rural location for barn conversion

A FOUR BEDROOM barn conversion in a semi-rural location is on the market based on offers around £385,000.

The property – 3, Wood Farm Barns, Gospel End Road – is within easy reach of Baggeridge Country Park, Sedgley Golf Club and Penn Common.

There is oak flooring, open-tread staircase, hardwood double glazing, gas central heating and underfloor heating throughout the ground floor.

Double doors access the dining hall. There is a boiler cupboard and double doors to the rear and guest cloakroom.

Off the hall is a spacious sitting room and a fitted breakfast kitchen has cream fronted units with contrasting drawers.

Integrated appliances include twin Bosch electric ovens, gas hob, fridge, freezer and dishwasher.

A winding oak staircase leads to a large landing with study area and large arch top windows. A master bedroom suite has en suite shower room, further double bedroom and luxury family bathroom. On the second floor are two more double bedrooms and a shower room.

A half-mile shared road leads to a block-paved drive and lawn area. A rear garden has a block paved patio and lawn.

Planning permission is being sought to convert stables to four double garaging. Call Berriman Eaton on 01902 747744.



The property, in Gospel End Road, is in easy reach of Sedgley Golf Club

An exclusive cul-de-sac for this detached home



Taylor's is selling this four-bedroom detached home in Oakham, Dudley, based on offers around £244,950

A FOUR-BEDROOM executive style house in an exclusive cul-de-sac is on the market based on offers around £244,950.

The property in Hillman Drive, Oakham, Dudley, is for sale with no upward chain with accommodation briefly comprising of entrance hall, lounge, dining room, kitchen with integrated appliances, guest cloak, conservatory, four bedrooms – the master en suite – and family bathroom.

On the ground floor the guest WC has a sink in vanity unit and toilet while the living room - 16ft by 13ft 4in - has a living flame gas fire in a feature fireplace and the dining room measuring 13ft 9in by 9ft 10in has patio doors to a conservatory which is 10ft 9in by 10ft.

The refitted kitchen, 10ft 8in by 10ft 4in, has a range of

base and eye level units with marble work surfaces, one and a half bowl sink drainer with mixer tap, Rangemaster five ring gas hob oven (available by separate negotiation), integrated dishwasher and refrigerator and door to garage.

On the first floor bedroom one has an en-suite with shower cubicle and there are three further bedrooms and a bathroom with white suite of panelled bath with shower over, WC and pedestal wash hand basin.

Outside the property stands behind a tarmac driveway with parking for six or more vehicles and leading to a garage, while the rear garden is landscaped and mainly laid to lawn with well stocked borders of trees, shrubs and plants, paved patio area, brick built barbecue, water feature and two garden sheds.

Call Taylor's on 01384 265265.

Halesowen Office 0121 6964053
Dudley Office 01384 849067

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Tansley Hill Road, Dudley



New Price

EPC D

Offers Over £200,000

Detached three bedroom property comprising lounge/diner, kitchen, family bathroom, front and rear gardens, garage and driveway.

Foxyards Road, Tipton



EPC Awaiting

Offers Over £160,000

A Detached three bedroom house with garage, off road parking, front and rear gardens. Situated on a corner plot. Viewing is essential.

Sledmore Road, Dudley



EPC Awaiting

Offers Over £125,000

Detached three bedroom property comprising lounge, extended dining room, extended kitchen, upstairs shower room, rear garden and driveway.

Nigel Road, Dudley



EPC Awaiting

Offers Over £110,000

A two bedroom semi detached bungalow briefly comprising lounge, kitchen and bathroom. Also benefitting from a garage and rear garden.

Elwell Crescent, Dudley



EPC Awaiting

Offers Over £90,000

End terraced property comprising entrance hall, lounge, modern kitchen, downstairs VVC, upstairs shower room, rear garden and driveway.

Ambleside Close, Bradley



EPC C

Offers Over £80,000

A two bedroom terraced property briefly comprising lounge, kitchen/diner, bathroom, front and rear gardens, driveway and allocated parking.

Central Avenue, Tipton



EPC Awaiting

Offers Over £80,000

Semi detached two bedroom property briefly comprising lounge, kitchen/diner, upstairs shower room, front and rear gardens and driveway.

Peel Way, Tividale



EPC C

Offers Over £70,000

Ground floor two bedroom flat briefly comprising entrance hall, lounge, kitchen, bathroom, rear garden and driveway.

Radbourne Drive, Halesowen



EPC D

Offers Over £240,000

This modern detached house situated at the head of a cul-de-sac with benefits including a drive, garage, front and rear gardens. Halesowen

Oak Tree Crescent, Halesowen



EPC E

Offers Over £210,000

Traditional four bedroom semi detached property on popular estate. Accommodation includes conservatory and rear garden. Halesowen

Hawne Lane, Halesowen



EPC E

£160,000

A traditional semi detached house briefly comprising three bedrooms, garden and off road parking. Halesowen

Spies Lane, Halesowen



EPC E

Offers Over £150,000

Traditional semi detached house comprises bay fronted lounge, separate dining room, kitchen, three bedrooms and family bathroom. Halesowen

Nimmings Road, Halesowen



EPC Awaiting

£120,000

A terraced house with accommodation comprising lounge, kitchen/diner, three bedrooms, rear garden, parking and garage at rear. Halesowen

Hillside Avenue, Rowley Regis



EPC D

Offers Over £110,000

This is a traditional three bedroom semi detached house situated in a cul-de-sac. The accommodation benefits from front and rear gardens. Halesowen

Severn Rise, Rowley Regis



EPC C

£100,000

A modern ground floor apartment with accommodation comprising lounge, kitchen, two bedrooms, en-suite and parking. Halesowen

Beecher Road East Halesowen



EPC D

£90,000

Semi detached property comprising lounge, kitchen, three bedrooms, bathroom, front and rear gardens. Halesowen

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 57 Reg Corsa CDTi £5795 or £35 pw	 08 Reg 207 1.4 HDi £5995 or £36 pw	 06 Reg Mondeo TDCi £3495 or £21 pw
 08 Reg 207 1.4 HDi £5795 or £35 pw	 56 Reg 1 Series BMW £5995 or £36 pw	 08 Reg Tigra 1.4 £6495 or £38 pw
 08 Reg Renault Megane £1995 or £15 pw	 57 Reg 1.9 DCi Megane Cab £5995 or £36 pw	 07 Reg Fiesta 1.4 TDCi £5495 or £33pw
 06 Reg Clio £3995 or £24 pw	 06 Reg Peugeot 206 £3495 or £21 pw	 07 Reg Picasso C4 HDi £5995 or £37 pw
 57 Reg Fiesta 1.25 Zetec £5195 or £32 pw	 58 Reg Focus TDCi £6495 or £40 pw	 62 Reg Megane DCi £12495 or £59 pw

Finance Example - Cash Price £3995, Less Cash or Part Exchange Deposit £500 Amount Of Credit £3495, Total Amount Payable £5495.60 48 Monthly Payments of £103.20 or 208 weekly payments of £23.82

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Motoring

Motability takes to road with a full range of cars

Disabled motorists can explore all their mobility options at a family friendly event launching this summer.

Taking place over two days at Stoneleigh Park Indoor Exhibition Centre in Warwickshire, 'The Big Event' will showcase the biggest range of cars available on the Motability Scheme in the UK.

Hosted by Motability - the leading car scheme for disabled people, The Big Event kicks off the established programme of regional One Big Day events on Friday 17 and Saturday May 18, 2013 with a further four events taking place across the UK throughout the summer.

Visitors to The Big Event will have access to more than 80 cars from over 20 manufacturers, over 30 models of scooters and a wide range of car adaptations and Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles.

Professional

There will also be a fleet of more than 30 adapted and non-adapted cars available for both drivers and passengers to test drive, with a professional driving instructor.

Expert Motability advisors and specialists will be on hand for those thinking of joining the Scheme for the first time or customers looking to renew their Motability car.

The Big Event provides fun for the whole family with free parking, a free cup of tea or coffee and the chance to win an iPad mini.

The little ones can make the most of the children's play area, face painting as well as the chance to meet the Motability mascot 'Billy the Bear'.

Mike Betts chief executive, Motability Operations explains: "This will be our sixth year of holding One Big Day events and we're pleased to be going



Disabled motorists will be able to see all their options at Stoneleigh Park

bigger and better for 2013. To date, more than 30,000 visitors have joined us at our events and with 'The Big Event' launching the 2013 programme, it gives even more people the chance to attend.

Informed "Stoneleigh Park Indoor Exhibition Centre is a great venue, so we don't even need to worry about the British weather. The huge variety of cars, products and adaptations on display means visitors will leave feeling well informed and having had a fun day out."

The full 2013 One Big Day line-up:

● The Big Event at Stoneleigh Park Indoor Exhibition Centre, Warwickshire on May 17/18 2013.

● One Big Day at Bath and West Showground, Somerset on Saturday June 15, 2013.

● One Big Day at Glow, Bluewater, Kent on Tuesday July 9 2013.

● One Big Day at Newcastle Racecourse, Northumberland on Thursday August 1 2013.

● One Big Day at Aintree Racecourse, Merseyside on Thursday August 8 2013.

All events will open at 9am, and finish at 4pm.

Visitors will also be able to share their One Big Day experiences by interacting with the 'Motability Events' Facebook page. 'Like' the page to stay up-to-date on all the latest news and developments from the Motability Events team.

For more information on The Big Event visit www.motability.co.uk/the-bigevent and for information on the full One Big Day programme visit www.motability.co.uk/onebigday.

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61 Reg Astra 1.6i VVT Exclusiv 5 dr Hatch, Blue, 4k miles	£9,995	£9,795
60 Reg Corsa 1.4 Design 5 dr, Black Sapphire, 22k miles	£7,995	£7,795
58 Reg Peugeot 308 1.4 S 5 dr Grey, 40k miles	£5,850	£5,250
05 Reg Ka 1.3 3 dr, Silver, 56k miles	£2,995	£2,495
56 Reg Astra 1.9 CDTi Sri Estate 150 Silver, 63k miles	£5,995	£5,795
57 Reg Citroen C1 1.0 Rhythm 3 dr, Yellow, 18k miles	£4,995	£4,495
59 Reg Yaris 1.3 VVTi TR 5 dr, Gre, 34k miles	£6,995	£6,495
08 Reg Toyota Aygo+ 1.0 VVT-1 5 dr, Red, 14k miles	£5,895	£5,750
06 Reg Toyota Yaris 1.3 T Spirit 3 dr, Blue, 53k miles	£4,995	£4,495
07 Reg Toyota Auris 1.6 VVTi TR 5dr, Grey, 63k miles	£4,995	£4,750
05 Reg Honda CR-Vi CDTi Executive Estate Red, 83k miles	£6,995	£6,750
58 Reg Honda Civic 2.2 SE I CDTi 5 dr, Blue, 29k miles	£9,295	£8,995
12 Reg Ford Fiesta Zetec 1.2 3 dr Hatch, White, 9k miles	£9,295	£8,995
10 Reg Hyundai i30 1.4 Classic 5dr, Silver, 22k miles	£6,995	£6,750
08 Reg Peugeot 207 1.4 S 3 dr, Silver, 32k miles	£5,495	£4,995
07 Reg Mercedes C220 CDI SE Auto Coupe 2.1 Silver, 50k miles	£8,445	£8,445
61 Reg Chevrolet Spark LS Plus 5 dr Hatch, Super Red, 4k miles	£6,495	£5,995
10 Reg Peugeot 207 Sort SW Est 1.6 Black, 30k miles	£7,595	£7,495
57 Reg Tigra Exclusive 1.4 Convertible Black, 25k miles	£6,390	£5,995
59 Reg Corsa Design 1.2 5 dr Hatchback, Silver, 27k miles	£6,995	£6,495
53 Reg Ford Focus 1.6 LX 5 dr, Red, 7k miles	£2,990	£2,495
58 Reg Corsa Active 1.3 CDTi Ecoflex 3dr, Silver, 52k miles	£6,495	£5,990
07 Reg Honda Jazz SE CVT 5 dr Hatch, 1.3, Silver, 21k miles	£7,250	£6,995
60 Reg Focus Zetec Auto 1.6 5 dr Hatch, Silver, 6k miles	£8,999	£8,850
09 Reg Alfa Romeo Mito Lusso 3 dr Hatch, Silver, 16k miles		£7,995



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SE 170 TDI DP Estate
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NOW £13,250



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Con 2.7
Black 63k miles
WAS £14,995
NOW £13,995



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4-dr Saloon, Silver,
59k miles
WAS £8,495
NOW £7,995



09 Reg Volvo C30
1.6D SE Coupe Silver,
23k miles
WAS £10,450
NOW £9,995



07 Reg Mini Cooper
1.6 3-dr Hatch, Blue,
28k miles
NOW £6995



05 Reg Jaguar X-Type
2.1 S 4-dr, Black,
33k miles
WAS £4,650
NOW £3,995



08 reg VW EOS Sport
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Silver 64k miles
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The British Grand Prix at Silverstone

Few sporting occasions match the intensity, glamour and drama of the Formula 1 British Grand Prix, and whether you are a wide-eyed first timer or seasoned veteran the experience is breathtaking.

This year both Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Button will be aiming to impress the loyal British fans at their home race and hoping to mount the steps of the Silverstone podium.

The British Grand Prix is the oldest race in the Formula 1 calendar, reaching its 63rd anniversary in 2013.

Originally a Second World War airfield, Silverstone has hosted the race regularly since 1950 and is famous for being one of the fastest and most challenging tracks on the F1 calendar.



FROM £199.⁹⁵

Day excursion departing June 30

Price includes:

- Return coach travel
- An early start to arrive at Silverstone for 6.30am
- A one-day General Admission ticket (upgrades offered)
- Services of a coach driver/tour representative

Organised by Omega Holidays (ABTA V4782)

For a brochure call (01902) 319999 (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm), or go to expressandstar.com/starextratravel

Please read brochure/web page for full information plus terms and conditions
Pick-up points offered are Dudley, Shrewsbury, Telford, Walsall and Wolverhampton

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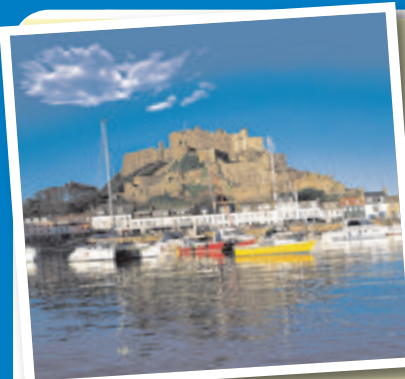
Jersey

Influenced by the UK and the continent, this island is unique and the place to go to for a holiday abroad that doesn't feel like it's too far away from home.

Country lanes, rugged cliffs, sandy beaches, castles and towers, all await you. Add to this the cosmopolitan town centre awash with boutiques and famous names, the gentle ambience of cafe culture and enough places of rare historic significance to make every day of your stay an unforgettable one.

There are also a number of attractions for you to visit including the Jersey War Tunnels, Durrell Wildlife Conservation Park, Mont Orgueil Castle and La Mare Wine Estate to name a few.

You will have a choice of accommodation in the Modern Group's two hotels, either the Hotel Metropole or the Mayfair Hotel. Both are three-star and located close to the town centre of St Helier.



FROM £349

Five, seven and eight day breaks
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Price includes:

- Return flights
- Half-board accommodation
- Return airport to hotel coach transfers
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Modern Hotels
(ABTA V3101, ATOL 0752)

For a brochure call (01902) 319999 (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm), or go to expressandstar.com/starextratravel

Please read brochure/web page for full information plus terms and conditions

star★extraTRAVEL

VIETNAM and Cambodia

The beautiful country of Vietnam is a mosaic of mist-shrouded mountains, vibrant green forests, a patch-work of rice paddies and pristine white beaches, whilst its villages and cities are custodians of the culture and monuments of a unique 2,000 year old civilisation.

In the past few years Vietnam has opened its doors to the world and much has changed. Today, in one of the world's last communist countries, the motorcycles and western dress of the youth happily co-exist with orange-clad Buddhist monks and political posters from a different era.

On this 16-day tour you will visit Hue, one of the country's most beautiful small towns and the former imperial capital. Here you will be able to see the amazing Citadel and its imperial Forbidden City, as well as the magnificent seven-storied Thien Mu pagoda, a working Buddhist shrine.

Contorted by years of erosion, explore the staggeringly beautiful rock formations of Halong Bay, a UNESCO World Heritage site from on board a converted Chinese junk. Then in Saigon you will be taken on a visit to the Cu Chi tunnels, a complex underground network which provided a base for the Vietcong from which to attack US forces. You will see the tunnels themselves and examples of the many mantraps and stake pits which protected them.

The overwhelming image of Vietnam is that of a country blessed with extraordinary beauty and the friendly Vietnamese always courteous and proud to show of their wonderful country.

In Cambodia you can experience the haunting soft morning light rise over the eerie temples of Angkor. Then later discover the huge fortified 13th century city of Angkor Thom, with its five monumental gates, and 300ft wide moat - its centre containing one of Angkor's most remarkable sites, the temple of Bayon.



16 days **FROM £1,899***
Various departure dates

Price includes:

- Return scheduled flights
- Thirteen nights bed and breakfast accommodation
- Five lunches
- Visits to the major sights of Vietnam and Cambodia
- Guided tours of Hanoi, Hue and Saigon
- Cruise aboard a converted Chinese junk visiting caves and grottoes at Halong Bay
- Visit the Cu Chi tunnels in Saigon
- Full-day cruise along the mighty Mekong River delta
- Visit the ancient city and temples of Angkor, Cambodia
- Guided tour of Phnom Penh
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

* varies according to departure dates please go to website for the latest availability and prices

Organised by Riviera Travel (ABTA V4744, ATOL 3430)

For a brochure call (01902) 319999 (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm), or go to expressandstar.com/starextratravel

Please read brochure/web page for full information plus terms and conditions

star★extraTRAVEL

South Africa

South Africa is a country five times the size of Britain and it has so much to offer the visitor, including breath-taking wildlife, stunning scenery, a huge sense of history, bustling cities plus first class food and wine.

The holiday includes 13 nights bed and breakfast accommodation in specially selected three and four-star hotels, three evening meals and a variety of stunning excursions.

For most visitors the highlight will be a full day's game drive that brings the chance to see the sweeping savannah and muddy waterholes lined with animals, and to marvel at the incredible 150 mammal and 500 bird species that live in the Kruger National Park, including the 'big five': elephant, lion, rhino, leopard and buffalo. Rooms are reserved at the three-star superior Hippo Hollow Country Estate, located in the midst of lush forest on the banks of the Sabie River. It's open-air terrace overlooks the grounds and river, so watch out for the hippos!

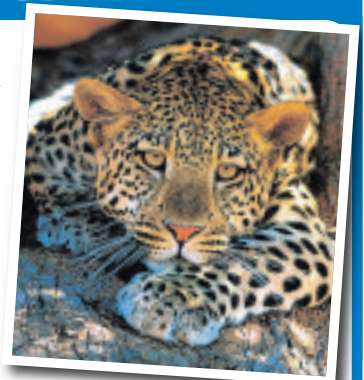
Those interested in history will be intrigued by the visit to Zululand, passing through Swaziland en route, to reach the haunting battlefields of Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift. In 1879 these two battles, just a day apart, became a defining moment for the British Empire and the specialist Zulu guide will make those desperate encounters come alive.

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Thriller but trying time for visitors

Yardley & District 56
Birmingham Barbarians 35
BIRMINGHAM Barbarians were involved in a 91-point thriller over the Easter weekend.

But they ended up on the wrong end of a 56-35 defeat at the hands of Yardley & District.

In what was a hastily rearranged match, the Barbarians were dominant in the forwards for long periods of the game.

They were rewarded for their efforts up front with tries for powerhouse props John Spencer and Sam Swancutt as well as a penalty try.

Skipper Roy Fisher weighed in with a brace of touchdowns with Lee Lamburn converting all five tries.

However, missed tackles cost the Barbarians dear with Yardley dominating proceedings behind the scrum.

Their talented back division enabled Yardley to run in a string of tries and take the win.

The Barbarians, based at Moor Lane in Perry Barr, are always on the lookout for new players.

For more information about the club, contact Dave Lawley on 07745 057936 or visit the club website www.bhambarbarians.co.uk

Rangers put wind up Wulfs

AFC Wulfrunians 4
Black Country Rangers 3
NINE-MAN Black Country Rangers gave the Wulfs a real scare.

Kyle Brady put the home side ahead from a Nathan Rose-Laing pass before Rangers' skipper Leigh Pardoe was sent off when his feet left the ground in a challenge shortly before half-time. Rose-Laing made it 2-0 soon after the break.

Andy Price's goal got Rangers back in the match but they lost Alex Hammond to a second bookable offence.

Michael Robertson stroked home a third for Wulfs before Brady added his own second, curling a shot into the bottom corner.

But Rangers came roaring back. Late goals from Arran Lloyd and Parkes produced a tense finale, but they could not find an equaliser.



Winston Reid, left, and Albion's Peter Odemwingie battle for possession at Upton Park



Baggies keeper Ben Foster is grounded as Gary O'Neil's sumptuous finish makes it two

East End nightmare reveals Albion flaws

West Ham 3 Albion 1

THE post-match reaction to Albion's East End nightmare was depressing yet revealing.

Online loons were out in force to deliver their verdict on a heavy defeat at Upton Park, *writes Steve Madeley.*

While their views were neither representative of the whole Baggies fanbase nor consistent with the facts, the knee-jerk minority did shed a light on the soaring expectations around The Hawthorns.

Jonas Olsson was a 'liability', claimed one keyboard crusader. Albion cannot succeed with a 4-4-2 system, screamed another.

Most extraordinarily of all was the claim that Steve Clarke's team - comfortably eighth with a handful of games remaining in world football's most competitive league - 'had not played well all season'. There was much nonsense spilling from a fervent few on forums.

Ambitions

Yet the reactionary response of the most demanding Baggies fans showed the team that ambitions continue to rocket and targets become higher by the month.

The stoppage-time brain-fade that saw Youssouf Mulumbu sent off in almost comic circumstances was a timely reminder of the potential effects of that added pressure. There were times not so long ago in Albion's turbulent Premier League history that games like Saturday's in East London were commonplace. The Baggies would turn up at one of the top flight's established venues and find themselves out-played, out-fought and out-thought. They would simply not put up a fight.

In the last three seasons, such occasions have become so rare that any relapse now prompts a serious inquest among supporters. Clarke, Roy Hodgson and their Baggies players have raised the bar of aspiration to a level not seen at The Hawthorns for a generation.



Dudley-born West Ham boss Sam Allardyce looks on as Andy Carroll eludes Jonas Olsson to put the Hammers a goal ahead

Now they have no choice but to embrace the extra pressure and accept that performances such as Saturday's will no longer be greeted with a collective shrug of resignation. The no-show at Upton Park was so shocking to travelling Albion supporters precisely because it was so unexpected.

Clarke and Co have been so strong since shaking off their mid-winter blues with victory at Liverpool that every fan who made the trip to the capital fully expected to see their side at least push the inconsistent Hammers all the way. In the end, Sam Allardyce's men won at a canter despite a bright Baggies start that was undermined crucially by defensive brittleness that handed Andy Carroll two goals of vastly differing style either side of Gary O'Neil's cultured strike.

Graham Dorrans' late penalty went some way towards softening the impact of Albion's

most abject defeat of 2013 so far but Mulumbu's ridiculous late red card completed the misery on a day when the crispness of Clarke's side deserted them.

Perhaps an early goal might have applied the jump leads to a stuttering Albion display and it almost arrived when a fierce Romelu Lukaku free-kick struck Shane Long and flew towards goal. But Jussi Jaaskelainen pulled off a fine save, diving to his right to claw the ball onto the woodwork, and those acrobatics set his team on course to run riot.

The Baggies' backline looked all at sea and it was breached just two minutes after Jaaskelainen's save as the Hammers broke with pace to win a corner and O'Neil's flag-kick was thundered home by the head of Carroll, who was allowed by Olsson to drift into a different postcode. Matt Jarvis missed a glorious chance to double the lead but that was just a temporary reprieve before a pacy

West Ham break from a Baggies set-piece ended with Ricardo Vaz Te teeing up O'Neil to bend in a shot.

A fractional improvement by Clarke's men after the interval saw Lukaku blast just off target and Billy Jones draw a smart save from Jaaskelainen. But the game was up with 10 minutes to go when Olsson and Gareth McAuley left Carroll acres of turf in the box to collect James Collins' free-kick and send a sublime volley low past Foster.

When Lukaku was bundled down by Matt Taylor on 87 minutes, Dorrans rifled the resulting penalty into the net.

But that goal did not ease Mulumbu's frustration and, when he had his heels clipped by O'Neil deep into stoppage time, the Baggies man drop-volleyed the ball at his opponent in a moment of petulant, inexcusable slapstick that will rob Clarke of his services for three games.

Lions fall again at Yorkshire last hurdle

Stourbridge Lions 8 Selby 36
THE Lions fell at the last hurdle for a second successive year in their bid to reach Twickenham.

The double Midlands Senior Vase winners failed last year against Wath-upon-Dearne. This time Yorkshire opponents Selby saw them off.

One-way first half traffic saw Lions' defence and poor Selby place-kicking keep the score to 17-3 at half-time.

Home points were from a Tom Mitchell penalty.

Lions mounted a second half comeback with a fine try from a 10-metre line-out catch and drive by captain Stuart Doolittle. That cut the deficit to nine points and gave the home crowd something to shout about.

The crucial moment came soon afterwards as Lions pressed for the line with a series of diving rucks.

Gap

Unfortunately the ball was turned over 10 metres out and Selby went the length of the pitch in three phases to score another try.

A potential two-point gap had become 14.

Selby cut loose in the last 20 minutes to add two converted tries and book their place in the national final at Twickenham.

Now the Lions, currently third in Midlands Three West (North) will seek to push their promotion prospects when they travel to Edwardians at the weekend.

Stourbridge are six points behind second-placed Newcastle (Staffs) but have a game in hand and also have to play their rivals at home in their penultimate game on April 20.

Moseley go on hunt for Leeds

MOSELEY Rugby Club, looking to retain their Championship status, host Leeds Carnegie at Billesley Common tomorrow night (7.45pm).

Moseley's losing bonus point last weekend ensured they remain 11 points clear of the relegation zone with three matches remaining.

The point was at least one consolation after Moseley went down 25-20 at home to London Scottish.

Home support will be aware that they face a tough challenge from visitors who will be looking for maximum points for a place among the play-offs in the top four.



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Scholars teach the Yeltz a lesson

Chasetown 3 Halesowen Town 0
HALESOWEN lost ground in the play-off chase with this Easter Monday defeat to rivals Chasetown.

After 60 people working over two days cleared 12 inches of snow off the pitch, it was in excellent condition for this Evo-Stik Premier Division One South encounter.

Chasetown took the lead in the 13th minute. Nick Wellecome rolled the ball to Paul Sullivan and his low cross was turned home by Theo Robinson.

With 30-goal marksman Ben Haseley in their line-up, Halesowen were always going to pose a threat and it was the Yeltz No.10 who went close to an equaliser when his effort struck Ryan Price's left-hand post.

Halesowen ended the half with better chances. Price palmed over a long range effort from Mitchell Botfield and then made a low save to deny Haseley. But Sullivan turned provider for Robinson again just short of the hour when his mazy run took him into the penalty area and a pass to unmarked Robinson saw Chasetown double their advantage.

Chasetown killed the game off seven minutes from time when Danny Bragoli's corner was headed across goal where Sullivan turned to thump an unstoppable volley.

Gueyes gets late winner

Halesowen Town 2 Brigg Town 1
HALESOWEN overturned a half-time deficit to take victory at the weekend.

Brigg's James Playford steered a good early chance wide before home striker Ben Haseley seemed certain to score in the 18th minute when clean through, only for goalkeeper Miles Fenty to snatch the ball from his feet.

Brigg captain Paul Grimes put the visitors into a 36th-minute lead after diverting a Liam Davis cross into the net.

Joe Hull headed the hosts level six minutes into the second period from a free-kick from Aaron Griffiths.

Yeltz keeper Paul Evans kept out a 79-minute effort from Grimes and a Davis effort flew over the bar.

But Jean-Michel Gueyes rifled home to hand the Yeltz all three points with his 85th-minute winner.



Jamie Orton, left, and Carl Breeze on the Brands podium
Picture: Jakob Ebrey Photography

Good start at Brands Hatch

REIGNING Michelin Ginetta GT Supercup Champion Car Breeze made the perfect start to his title defence for Total Control Racing at Brands Hatch Indy Circuit over the weekend.

He took an impressive win during the opening round. Although the remainder of the event wasn't as fruitful for the Kings Lynn driver, Wednesday-based TCR also celebrated podium success for Jamie Orton and Mark Davies. All three confirmed their championship credentials.

Breeze produced a remarkable start to the first race of the year, rocketing

Motor racing

from fourth on the grid into second place by the first corner, then profiting from a slight mistake by team-mate Orton to grab the lead. Retirement from race three was a blow but he did post a top six finish in round two to ensure a strong haul of points to begin his 2013 campaign very competitively.

Orton's second season in the Supercup began spectacularly on Saturday morning when he claimed his maiden category pole position for round one.

Losing the lead to Breeze on the first lap, Orton slipped to third on lap four but remained there to secure a deserved podium. Starting round two from third on the grid, Orton bagged his second podium on the trot. In race three, the streak ended when contact pitched him into retirement.

In contrast to the fortunes of his team-mates, Davies enjoyed his best result of the weekend in round three. Running in fourth early on, he moved into the podium positions on lap two and then ran in second for several laps before claiming a deserved third place.

Injury to Roynon takes off the gloss

Coventry 41 Birmingham 49
BRUMMIES got their 2013 Elite League campaign off to a flying start in a meeting marred by an awful crash involving Adam Roynon.

The Coventry man, who skipped the Dudley Heathens last year, spun and fell. He was hit by the following Josh Auty, who had no chance of avoiding him.

Roynon was attended to on track for around half an hour and was later given a brain scan in hospital.

But although the Cumbrian will spend several more days in hospital, he is awake, alert and has been talking to visitors.

Heathens chairman Nigel Pearson said: "Not only is he a talented rider, but anyone who knows him will tell you what a smashing lad he is."

"I'm sure all Heathens supporters will join me in wishing 'Roynon' all the very best for a full recovery."

It was Brummies fans who had most to cheer in this derby clash at Brandon.

The sides were locked at 18-18 after six races but the Selco Brummies, featuring several former Coventry riders, eventually eased clear.

Martin Smolinski's win in the re-run heat 14 following Roynon's crash underlined victory for the visitors and they made sure of all four league points when Chris Harris and Danny King relegated Grzegorz Zengota to fourth in the last race.

The two teams were due to meet in the return at Perry Barr last night.

Coventry: Scott Nicholls 12, Krzysztof Kasprzak 7, Grzegorz Zengota 7, Michal Szczepaniak 5, Mateusz Szczepaniak 4, Aaron Summers 4, Adam Roynon 2.
Birmingham: Martin Smolinski 19, Danny King 13, Nico Covatti 6, Chris Harris 5, Josh Auty 4, Ben Barker 2.

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CLAUDIO WARMS TO TASK IN NO.5 SHIRT

ALBION favourite Claudio Jacob has spoken of his pride at being the Baggies' No.5 – but revealed the freezing West Midlands weather has been his biggest test yet.

Yacob gave his first interview in English and thanked Baggies fans for giving him a warm welcome at The Hawthorns. But he admitted the cold weather has left him shivering after his free-transfer move from Buenos Aires outfit Racing Club which took place last summer.

"I am pleased with my performances and I want to offer more to the club," said Yacob, who has been a consistent figure as the Baggies have become established in the top half of the Premier League.

"I am very happy and I will always do my best to please the fans," he said.

"The people are very polite and I like the food. It is different to Argentine food but I like it. But I have never been so cold in my life. I miss the sunshine!"

"It is a very competitive league but it is what I expected it to be, and I have enjoyed it very much."

Duo

"I think we have had a good season and we hope to keep up the good work. The fans' welcome means a lot to me and I would like to thank them for it."

The 25-year-old was handed the No.5 shirt on his arrival at Albion after wearing it since he was a teenager at Racing Club.

The number is traditionally worn in Argentina by defensive midfielders. And Yacob has formed an impressive central midfield duo with fellow fans' favourite Youssouf Mulumbu.

"I have always worn the No.5 shirt in Argentina so I am happy to wear it at Albion," he said.

by Steve Madeley

"I enjoy playing with Youssouf a lot. I think we complement each other."

Meanwhile, coach Dean Kiely has hailed the impact of keeper Boaz Myhill in helping Ben Foster to shine.

Glovesmen Luke Daniels and Myhill, who went to Marches School in Oswestry, extended their Albion contracts in the last two weeks despite finding England international Foster impossible to shift from the first team. Former Baggies star Kiely, who coaches the keepers, believes all three play vital roles.

"Ben plays in the first team but when he was injured Boaz stepped in and played seven games and contributed to three wins and a draw, kept a clean sheet and made a really big effort," said Kiely.

"If he wasn't primed and ready to go, there would have been problems. We've got a third goalkeeper (Daniels) who has just signed a contract to stay and I am happy about that because the dynamic has to work."

Boss Steve Clarke said: "I have been really pleased with the three goalkeepers and with Dean Kiely's work with them."

Archer hits the target at martial arts big day

CHARLESWORTH Martial Arts of Halesowen have had a rush of silverware.

They took several honours at two different events, including the World United Martial Arts Federation English Open at Worcester.

Seven-year-old Keane Archer got the ball rolling there in the under-125cm light contact division, coming away after several tough fights as the English open champion.

Tyler Cox, aged nine, entered two divisions and won both. Next up was Calum Pearson, 15, who contested the light contact and point fighting sections and was victorious in each.

Sixteen-year-old Holly O'Connor, who travels 60-plus miles three times a week to train at CMA, entered the ladies under-60kg section. She had several challenging fights, but reached the final and was victorious.

The last CMA fighter was four-times world champion Julie Charlesworth, back from retirement after four years out. She overcame a nervy start to take victory.

All the CMA fighters were entered into the overall grand championships divisions – and every one of them won.

Anyone wishing to start kickboxing can visit www.cmafreestyle.co.uk for more information or call Jason Charlesworth on 07889 627929.



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